

# "I are..."

.....the confession of a mastermind or proof of abnormality?



“A genius, until proves himself a genius, is often considered abnormal!”

*It's more than just a book!*



*Written By: SP*



**“I ARE...”**

***...the confession of a mastermind or proof of abnormality?***

***A genius, until proves himself a genius, is often  
considered abnormal!***

**Satisfaction is the ultimate destination of life.**

**Keep in mind, the real self-satisfaction comes from the real deeds.**

“A friend in need is a friend indeed” “A friend indeed is just for some need!” and lights up a ‘joint’ (marijuana wrapped up in a paper/cigarette)

“Who’s there? Hey you, come out. Who’re you hiding from?”

Frightened Aman wakes up at wee hour suddenly to find no one in the room!

"Truly said by Harriet Tubman, ‘I freed a thousand slaves! I could have freed a thousand more if only they knew they were slaves!’ Mind you! Losers work in the corporate world and winners own it. No matter what position you are at, if you're not an owner, you're a slave just like me. We're in the same boat. ", warns Aman, an IT employee, to the HR leader of his company!

“...then we started creating pages on social media. We even sent emails to the media and posted Ads on different websites.”

We titled it “Brain For Sale!”

***"I'll be there for you whenever you should need me. I promise."***

Note: This book is not written by a professional or aspiring writer. The intention of this book demands originality. Hence, it has not been edited or corrected by any professional.

**A request: Please do not reveal the climax or motto of the book.**

By: The Mishra (SP)

## The Childhood

### Chapter 1:

Capital City of a neighbouring country; 1985 to 1991

Warning: This chapter may sound like an old Bollywood crap. But this is what it is.

Everyone's life is like a movie.

Everyone is a hero of his own story.

Aman's journey too is no less than a movie story.

A story that will remain with you for a long time.

Its mid-night June 15<sup>th</sup>, 1985.

An ambulance stops in front of the gate.

A staff in white gown opens the ambulance door and takes the stretcher out.

A good looking 25yrs old man carrying his wife in stretcher rushes to the ambulance.

Entire family and relatives follow them to the hospital.

“Congratulations! It's twins.” A nurse congratulates the father.

Everyone starts congratulating each other.

A sigh of relief and happiness is obvious.

A happy moment for the entire family.

They name them Manav and Aman.

Manav is an hour elder to Aman. He seems quiet and hardly smiles.

Aman is just opposite. He likes to smile and seems to be a naughty child.

Honesty is in their blood.

Originally from a small town of Bihar, Grandfather had relocated to this neighbour country.

Despite being a newspaper owner and having contacts with the decision makers of the country he's currently residing in, lives a simple middle class life here, which tells the whole story of his honesty.

Out of four, including Manav's grandfather, who were jailed for their rebellious stands back in 60's/70's, three, later, became top-level ministers of this country.

But Manav's grandfather never believed in making politics a profession.

He also knew the fact that his honest and straight forward nature doesn't make him a suitable person for politics.

Moreover, he didn't see himself getting involved in all these for mere money and fame.

His principles and position do make him a reputed personality.

And, this reputation is what he always wanted to achieve.

At the same time, like most of the families, they too have a mother-in-law-daughter-in-law strained relationship.

But overall it's a happy and a reputed family where every member knows how to take a stand for their rights.

However, God seems to have some other plans for this family as he decides to take Manav away from all, leaving Aman alone and hurt.

Not only is he hurt but there is a drastic change!

He has become quiet now and he hardly smiles!

Can a two months old kid feel the trauma?

Probably, he can.

Life is harsh but it goes on...

Nursery....

K.G....



Aman wakes up screaming at a mid-night:

“Hey! Who’s there? Mom, someone is there?”

Mom turns on the light but, surprisingly, sees Aman asleep.

“Beta! What happened? Why did you scream?”

Mom tries to confirm if he’s asleep or not.

Gets no response from Aman.

There is some cultural event going on at Aman’s school.

The senior boys from 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> standard are performing on stage and he is watching them from the audience.

“...she puts on a make-up and brushes her long long hair... and I say yes ‘you look wonderful tonight’”

“Let me take you far away.... A holiday! ... the good times and fun... let me.. Holiday...”

Aman is tapping his feet and seems to be enjoying it thoroughly.

One of the seniors from 2<sup>nd</sup> standard approaches Aman.

He accompanies the senior leaving concert midway!

The mother, as always, goes to the school to pick Aman up.

But she's surprised to know that he has not been in class after the lunch break!

Worried mother runs to relative's house seeking help.

They all start searching the kid, but fail to find him.

A police complaint is lodged.

They return back with no luck.

To their surprise, they see Aman sitting in front of the door with his bags on, waiting for them.

Mom rushes towards him, kisses him and coos;

"Where were you?"

"Mom! I'd gone to watch Amitabh Bachchan with a senior!"

"Amitabh Bachchan?! Why didn't you inform anybody at school? And how did the guard allow you out?"

"No Mummy! It's a movie I am talking about. The senior boy told me that he's going to watch Amitabh's movie in a theatre. We watched 'Sharaabi' (Alcoholic)" replies the kid innocently making everyone laugh.

"There couldn't have been a better movie for a 6 years old kid. Good job Son", says the father in a funny tone.

"That senior must have fooled you and asked you to buy him a ticket!" Mom tries to get the information.

"Yes! I lent him two rupees. He didn't have money."

"Such a stupid kid!" says a relative and laughs at the kid.

Mom doesn't think it is funny, "Beta! Only bad boys 'bunk' classes and go to the theatre. You're a good boy. My son is a good boy. Promise me you won't repeat it again", and starts blaming his Dad for all these.

The father takes the kid in his arms, "So, did you like the movie? From next time let me know if you want to watch a movie. We'll go together. Ok?"

Aman's grandfather decides to retire and spend rest of his life in his hometown, Bihar, India; thinking that his son would take care of the business.

However, his son has his own plans.

He doesn't want to be under the shadow of his father and wants to start his own newspaper.

"I'd rather start my own business. If you can help me financially then it's good or else I'll see if I can manage", speaks out Aman's father.

Aman's grandmother, a Sanskrit teacher by profession back home, is the decision maker of house. She is a strict and egoist lady.

She thinks that it's the daughter-in-law who's brain-washed her son.

"Get the hell out of my business. Let's see how you manage! Go and get yourself a name. We don't need you", said angrily the old lady.

"When you will have no money to survive, then you will get to know what it takes to build a name, a position."

Aman watches them quarrel, helplessly.

"He's my grandson and I don't want you to ruin his childhood. If you want to suffer it's your decision but my grandson will not suffer with you. He'll come along with us", orders the grandmother.

They decide to shut down the newspaper and move back to India.

They take Aman along with them due to bad financial condition of his father who's now kicked out of business.

They're ready to leave.

Granny, holding Aman's hand and carrying a bag, walks towards the main gate.

Aman probably wants to say something.

He turns back and looks at his mom, who's in tears as she waves goodbye, and probably thinks:

"Mom! Please don't cry, I'll be back soon."

## Chapter 2:

1991 to 1996 Small Town, Bihar

Loud speaker is on: Chalat Musafir Moh liya Re pinjare wali muniya.....!!  
They enter the village in horse and buggy.

“Jhoot bole kauwa kate, kale kauwe se dariyo.....mai maike chali jaungi, tu dekhtey rahiyo!”..... Aman is enjoying the music on loud speaker.

“B\*h\*n Ch\*d! Bhains hataa raastey se!” shouts the horse-carriage driver.

They cross the market.

“Pranam! Devi ji, Pranam Maalik”, “Devi ji Pranam”, “Paai Laagu Maalik”, villagers greet them.

“What is this crowd for? Why is she acting like this?” asks Aman pointing at a woman who’s surrounded by dozens of people.

“Beta! She’s been possessed by Ghost! And the man with garlands is a ‘Tantrik’ performing his rituals. ” explains the grandmother.

If you want to have a closer look at life then try and spend some time in a village.

You will get to know what ‘Struggle’ is, what the real poverty is. At the same time a village can also teach you unity, value of money, importance of a society and adjustments.

New climate, new lifestyle. Everything is so different! Yet so refreshing.

Aman continues his education in small town.

Joins the same school where grandmother teaches Sanskrit.

Grandma is popularly known as ‘Guruaain’, lady teacher, and she’s among the very few educated lady in and around the town.

Aman is not able to adopt the village life completely but he’s loving it.

He’s got couple of friends to play with.



One of them is a girl named Nutan. A tom-boy who plays cricket, kabaddi etc.

She's a couple of years elder to Aman who he calls Didi (elder sister).

He enjoys their company.

However, it's hard for him not to miss his mother as he's too young to be away from her.

Years pass; one year... two years...

At the other end, his father is still struggling to make a stand.

Somehow he starts his own newspaper.

Like father like son. He too chooses father's path, i.e. the path of honesty, which ultimately gives them the real satisfaction, they believe!

But it is not easy for an honest person to succeed.

Media and journalism is a powerful medium and if used with an intention of making money then it's a field which can make you super rich. At the same time if you prefer to be honest, neutral and straight forward then this field can give you a lot of respect but unfortunately not the luxurious comfort easily. You got to earn every bread. You got to keep on proving yourself at every stage to the people. You will get no supports from any party or groups. They'll try to bribe you at every stage.

Aman at the same time is growing up away from parents.

Fortunately, he's the grandparents who take care of every small demands.

Every night grandmother has to tell a story, if not, Aman would refuse to sleep.

"Today I will tell you Ramayana", she tells the story "King Dashrath has four sons: Rama, Laxman, Bharat and Shatrughan... One day, Janak ji finds Goddess Sita at a farmland while farming.... Rama breaks the archery and marries Goddess Sita..... And then ..... Raavana kidnaps Sita....."

"Let's sleep now. I'll continue the story tomorrow." Says the grandma.

Next day, she continues the story.

"Rama with the help of Hanuman and his friends kills Raavana and rescues Sita..... In jungle, when Lord Rama sees Sita, he gets to know that Lov and Kush are actually his children....."

Aman interrupts "But you said he is a God. If Rama was a God then he would have been aware of all these. Why didn't he recognize his own children?"

Granny explains “Rama was a re-incarnation of Lord Vishnu. He was re-incarnated as a human being with the same emotions, feelings and strengths. Though he was a Lord, he was living a normal human being’s life.”

Aman is confused. Who is God? Does he even exist? Where does he live? “If he’s a God or sent by God then why did he let his own supporters die who were innocent?” The doubts are endless.

“Granny! Can God give me everything that I want? How can I please the God?” asks the kid.

“The only way we can please the God is ‘Karma’. The better human we are the more pleased he is. Not everything that you want but yes, once pleased, he’d give you everything that you need.”

“There used to be a bird-trainer who used to train birds before setting them free, making sure that they don’t get trapped by any kind of web or hunter. He used to teach a sort of ‘hymn’ to the birds.

He decides to train few birds. The birds mug up the ‘hymn’. When the trainer is convinced that these birds have thoroughly learnt the hymn and won’t get trapped, he sets them free.

The birds fly singing the ‘hymn’. A hunter hears them singing and thinks it would be difficult to trap these trained birds. However, he makes an effort to give it a try. To his surprise, the birds get trapped quite easily! But they still keep singing the ‘hymn’ they’ve learnt.”

Aman laughs at their stupidity.

“Why did you laugh?” asks grandmother.

“What’s the use of learning if they finally got trapped?!”

“Correct! It means, don’t mug-up but learn. Learning itself is not important as long as you don’t implement it. Don’t only learn, implement.” She educates the kid.

“Aman asks really good questions. He seems very bright.” Informs the grandma to her husband.

“Yes, he’s sharp. Let’s hope he doesn’t choose a wrong path.” Says the Grandpa.

“I am sure he’s a smart kid who knows what’s right and what’s not.”

“Take this wooden stick. Can you break it?” Passes the stick to Aman.

He breaks it quite easily and smiles.

She ties 5 sticks together, “Now break these 5 pieces of sticks tied together. Can you?”

He tries but fails to break it.

“That’s unity” educates the grandmother.

“Keep in mind, you should always stick by your family members, relatives and friends. If you fall apart, it will be easier for others to break you. But if you’re joined together, you will be much stronger.”

He makes a note of it.

While he prefers grandmother for inspiring stories, he spends time with grandfather who gives him wisdom that he’s gained from life and his experience.

“You’ll always get two options or paths to choose from. One would look very easy and attractive and the other would appear highly difficult and discouraging. While the one that appears easy and attractive would welcome you with its arms wide open by rewarding you with money and luxury, the other option would test you at every stage rather than rewarding you initially. Which one would you chose?” Asked grandfather.

“Obviously! The first option. But why would there be second option if it didn’t have any reward? It has to have some rewards, right?” questions curiously.

“Right. Self-satisfaction and self-respects are the rewards you would gain initially. However, if you stick to the same path till the end then you’re sure to achieve your goals. You will surely emerge a winner. The first option may give you lot of fame and money but mostly at the cost of self-respect. Now tell me which one would you go for?”

“How would I know if I am on the first path or the second?” asks another question.

The grandpa smiles, “Whenever you realise that life’s been very easy and kind to you and you’re earning everything so easily, stop. Think. Ask yourself “Did I do it right? Am I really happy achieving it? Did I achieve it in a right way? You will get the answer. In contrast; when life gets tougher despite doing everything right, when people around you start discouraging and criticizing you, when you start finding it difficult to cope up with surroundings thinking you’re honest and hence different, you’re on the right path.”

Aman looks confused as he’s got many questions running in his mind.

The grandfather explains “Eventually, second path will give you tremendous self-respects and ultimately take you to the spot which would be out of reach for those who’ve chosen the first path. The length of success, if you chose the first path, is very small in comparison to the second path. Stick to the second path no matter what and you shall get an eternal success”

“I will choose the second path.” Aman replies promptly.

“It’s easy to start and difficult to continue. But dear grandson, keep in mind, **the difficulty that you face would be an indication of you being on the right path.** Do not get discouraged by criticisms. Rather congratulate yourself and move on. Difficulties give us a proper shape, it makes us stronger and teaches us lessons. Always welcome them with an open heart and a smile. For you to stick to the difficult path you need to be honest, true, dedicated and patient.”

He further adds **“Honesty will give you the courage. Truth will give you the confidence. Dedication will keep you focused and Patience will give you the success.”**

Aman makes a note of this ‘hymn’.

The grandmother is getting ready for school but seems to have misplaced her wrist watch.

Aman seems to be busy finishing his homework at the last moment. He has a pen, made up of bamboo, in his hand and an ink pot in front of him. He seems to be cursive-writing. Part of daily homework to improve handwriting.

“Aman, are you ready for school? Did you see my watch? Help me find it.” She looks at a wall, “Oh! It’s already 15 past 9, I am late for school.”

“Yes, Granny! I am ready. How do you know it’s 9:15 when you don’t have a watch handy?”

“Look at the sunlight’s shadow on the wall. When the shadow touches 11<sup>th</sup> row of the bricks on the wall, its 9:00am, the shadow has just crossed 1/4<sup>th</sup> of the brick of 11<sup>th</sup> row, which means it should be around 9:15am.”

He finds her the watch and looks at time, its 9:20am.

Three years... four years... five years pass.

Sometimes, he also accompanies servant to graze the buffalos and collect grasses from farmlands.

Aman experiences every small to big thing that people in village normally do.

Farming, fishing, swimming, from dealing with thieves to handling cheap mentalities and so on.

Besides, he plays cricket, Gilli-danda (fig: a sport played in village), marbles, wrestling, playing-cards, chess and every game that’s available in village.



Aman’s gradually transformed himself into a typical village boy.

Aman along with his friends including Nutan are at a playground.

"Kabaddi! Kabaddi! Kabaddi!!... .... Kabaddi!"

The opponent tries their best to trap this 11 year old boy but he dodges them quite easily.



Aman's neighbour, a 60+ year old conservative man, sees them play.

He slaps Nutan and orders her to leave.

Nutan stares at the old man as if she'd slap him back and refuses to leave.

"Come here." He then calls Aman.

The old man first scolds the kids and warns them not to play with him or Nutan.

"Do you know which caste they belong to? We don't even let them touch us and shame on you! How could you play with them? Go and take a bath and dare you play with them again."

Aman looks at his embarrassed friends.

He replies in anger, "My grandparents know who my friends are and they don't have any problem with it. Who're you to tell me who my friends should be?"

Aman's voice becomes louder as he gets emotional, "You're right! I'll have to take a shower but not for playing with them but for talking to you."

The old man looks dismayed while Nutan and the kids start laughing.

"Kids like him are a big threat to our culture and society." complains the old man and leaves.

Morning shows the day!

Aman is blunt and harsh.

He doesn't care whether the person he's talking to is old or big!

If he doesn't like him, he makes obvious for the person to know that he's being disliked!

Aman doesn't like any discrimination.

Though people around him are very conscious about class and caste, he belongs to a liberal family.

The grandfather believes, "**Playing with them doesn't make you small but to think yourself superior to them does make you small.** We're all the same."

"But! That uncle told me that they're poor and lower caste. We shouldn't be-friend with them! Grandpa, why are they called lower caste? They're nice and helpful people. I like them."

Grandfather educates the kid saying "**Had there been no insecurities, there wouldn't exist a society.** This society is formed by a bunch of insecure people. These show-offs, discriminations etc. are the result of insecurity."

A person is not rich or poor because of his financial condition but because of his thinking. Yes, they're nice people and that is what makes them rich and upper to us, not their caste."

"I don't like this uncle. The other day I saw him shouting at our servant for no reason. Why does he behave as if these people are out of the world, some aliens?"

"Satisfaction! Losers try to satisfy themselves by dominating others, pulling others down, proving others inferior and projecting others failure rather than proving self a winner. This uncle, probably, lacks genuine satisfaction, hence, he tries to satisfy himself by dominating others."

The grandfather enlightens the kid saying, "When you achieve something; most of the people try to ignore it or rather pretend that they're not aware of it. From those who can't, few start projecting your worse side to others to overshadow your achievements."

"Did he really achieve it? I can sense some foul play! I doubt."

"It's not a big achievement. It's normal. Ignore!"

"You know, he'd failed miserably multiple times. I could have done it better. Huh!"

"These statements define a loser. You will mostly encounter people who'll not be ready to accept you as a winner and try to prove you a loser at every stage. But you must always say to yourself 'Yes, I can achieve more. I'm sure I've the ability.' **Their discouragements should be a reason for you to encourage yourself more.**"

The grandpa asks, "Anyways, you tell me, what satisfies you the most?"

"Self-respect!"

Grandpa smiles, keeps him on his laps and asks, “And what is self-respect?”

**“Self-respect for me is being my own hero.”** Answers Aman.

Grandpa gives a proud and impressed look.

The next day, Aman and granny are on their way to school, it’s a walking distance.

Aman sees an old lady staggering due to heavy weight of baggage.

“Granny! Please take my bag to school, I’ll catch you there. Let me help that lady.”

Granny smiles and tells him to help the lady and be at school on time.

He walks to the old lady, takes her baggage and drops it to her house.

“Jeetey raho beta!” (May you live long!), blesses the old lady.

While on his way back he sees Nutan in a Sari and her face wrapped up partially or covered up with the pallu / aanchal of sari.

There are few strangers, probably guests, outside her house who’re being served tea and biscuits.

Nutan’s father sees Aman staring at them. He invites him to have biscuits.

Aman, curious to know what’s happening with Nutan Didi, joins them.

One of the guests asks, “Do you know how to knit sweaters?”

Nutan, who’s a tom-boy, replies politely in a soft voice, “Yes, I do.”

“Can you show us some samples?” asks another guest.

Nutan’s father gets a couple of sweater from room and shows it to the guests.

“Good. It’s nice. The neckline could have been better though. Anyways, tell me what the current price of potatoes in market is?”

“One rupee fifty paise per kg.” she replies like a disciplined and soft-spoken girl.

They ask her to walk for 20 meters. After observing her walk and other qualities they ask for a couple of minutes to discuss among themselves.

“We like her. But she has to improve cooking.”

Smiles the guest and adds, “No worries, her mother-in-law will train her. After all, she’s very young.”

Nutan, who’d be getting married by a couple of months, is hardly 13 years old!

No more Kabaddi for her. No more tom-boyish attitude.

Her life ends here! I mean, her life starts here.

A ‘happy married-life’.

A life that would revolve around her husband and in-laws!

Locked in a room 24\*7, pretending to be someone she is not.

What a life!

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“Who’s there? Hey! Come out. Who’re you hiding from?” Aman screams at the wee hour while everyone is asleep.

“What happened? Who’re you talking with?” surprised grandmother lights the lantern.

“I’m sorry! I felt someone is there.” and falls asleep.

The next morning grandmother discusses the incident with his grandfather.

“I am concerned, this is the second time I have heard him screaming.”

“Don’t worry. It’s normal for a kid to get scared.” He tries to convince.

Postman! Postman!!

“Are you there? Come fast! Your son has sent a letter. Pass me the spectacles please.”

The grandmother runs, I correct, a mother runs happily with spectacles.

“Aman come here. Your Dad has sent a letter.”



24/03/1997

*Pujyaniya Babuji and Maa*

*Pranam,*

*We're fine here. Hope you're doing well.*

*After going through all the struggles and ups & downs, I am happy to inform you that I am stable now.*

*I've sent you a copy of my newspaper.*

*Please let me know if you want to see any improvements.*

*Soon we'll find a distributor for our town.*

*Hope to make you proud someday.*

*My financial condition is stable now and I can take care of Aman.*

*I've admitted him in a school here.*

*His class will start soon.*

*Please send him back as soon as possible.*

*Pranam!*

*Your's Loving*

*Son*

Aman runs towards his granny, holds her hand and weeps;

“I don't want go. I don't want to leave you. No. I want to stay here.”

“Give me a hug.” Says the old lady and starts sobbing like a baby.

“Please don't cry. I'll be back in a month.” Aman tries to console her.

The grandfather, too, is grief-stricken and at a loss of words.

Aman walks to each of them and tries to commiserate.

“Don’t cry! I will stay in touch. I will come to meet you every month. I will write letters to you. I will tell Dad to call you home. We’ll stay together.”

Meanwhile, a couple of kids shout, “Aman! Are you home?”

“We’ve a cricket match now. Come out.”

Granny kisses Aman on his forehead and tells him to join his friends.

Aman leaves with them to the playground.

The grieving grandparents try to empathize each other.

“This is our destiny. We knew someday he had to go back.”

“Aman will be much happier with his parents and get a better education now.

It’s good for his future.”

Aman is now very attached to his grandparents.

But, as his journey has been, once again, he’s no option but to depart.

And yet another goodbye.

### **Chapter 3:**

Capital city of a neighbouring country 1997 to 2002

Aman is back to the city.

He’s twelve now.

“Mom! I am back”

Unable to control emotion, she starts crying.

“Why are mothers so emotional?” asks Aman with an intention to make her smile.

Mom laughs in appreciation.

**Sixth standard:**

He, certainly, is not the kid he used to be six years ago.

Aman enters his new class and walks towards the front bench.

The whole class gives a strange look at him.

Couple of them laugh at him and few look at each other surprisingly.

He seems to have come directly from some playground as he's mired.

Improperly dressed, the zips on, not so well combed hair!

Aman, as he actually is, looks like a villager who's just come out from there.

He also has the mother tongue influence when he speaks.

You can call him a villager who finds himself lost or rather confused in the contrast life styles he's lived in past decade.

"Bhaiya!" is what he's referred as by the bad boys of his class.

Every now and then they would pull his legs, make fun of him.

Aman, unaware of it, joins them in the laugh-riot.

"Where did you buy this pant from? Bhaiya!" asks a classmate.

"My father bought it for me. Ha! Ha!" He replies and starts laughing with them.

Another laugh riot for all.

Out of curiosity "Dad! My classmates call me Bhaiya. I'm their classmate. Doesn't Bhaiya mean elder brother? Then why do they call me Bhaiya?" he asks.

Father tries to hint him to dress properly but doesn't want to hurt him as he's a sensitive kid, "Yes, it means elder brother. They call you Bhaiya, because they respect you."

Not convinced with the reply he mentions the same in front of his cousin brother.

“Ha! Ha! You’re such a dumb.” and explains him why they call him a bhaiyya.

Aman feels bad. He realizes that all these days his classmates have been making fun out of him.

He starts keeping a distance from his classmates.

It’s time for a school trip.

A school-trip to Darjeeling, Dehradun, Nainital and Nepal (Kathmandu, Pokhara).

Beautiful country. Beautiful people. Beautiful view. Natural beauty.

Kathmandu valley, full of temples, surrounded by mountains and greenery.

People from Nepal are famous for their bravery and honesty and it can be seen when you meet them.

Pokhara, an amazing city famous for its natural beauty.

Mountains, caves, waterfalls, lakes and temples.

They enjoy rock climbing, rafting, boating, caves and lakes etc.

Time for shopping.

“What did you buy for your parents?” asked a lady teacher.

“I was left with only 500/- so I thought of buying something which would be meaningful to both my Dad and Mom. I bought a Mangalsutra (a chain worn by Hindu married women for husband’s long life) for my Mom.”

This was the first gift of Aman to his Mother.

### **Seventh standard!**

A new boy joins his class.

Riyaan.

A stylish city boy who's got the attitude in his looks.

Smartly dressed up, enters the class and confidently checks out the class.

Stares at the first benchers and grabs the last bench, the corner one.

Sports week!

Aman participates in: Basketball, Chess and Volleyball.

Also, poem-writing competition.

Riyaan, the new student, has also participated and is a teammate.

He tries to befriend with Aman but arrogant Aman avoids him.

Volleyball: Well played Aman.

Well served Riyaan.

His team wins the final.

Basketball: His team stands second.

Aman also wins Chess competition 2<sup>nd</sup> time in a row and best poem award.

Time for awards.

He receives award for Chess, basketball and poem.

But wait! Why is his name not called for volleyball?

Instead of him a junior, son of chairman, who didn't play even a single match has been awarded.

Aman is blank.

He hopelessly looks at a teacher.

The teacher avoids eye-contact with him.

Riyaan, unable to control his laughter, laughs out loudly at Aman and his situation.

Embarrassed Aman thinks for a second and starts laughing at his own situation!

Discriminations from students and teachers make Aman start behaving unfriendly.

He tries to voice out his concerns but teachers prefer to ignore it.

English teacher enters the class.

“Hey you bloody Bihari”; the teacher shouts at Aman as he finds him talking in the class. Surprised and angry Aman replies in the same tone “Sir! You have no right to.... “;

“Let me show you what my rights are”.

The teacher starts thrashing him.

He continues shouting “You’re wrong. This is unfair. You’re misusing your power” but the teacher doesn’t stop.

Lunch Break!

Gloomy Aman is sitting under a tree.

“I am becoming a target, a victim. This is not something that I want.” He thinks. “Teachers insult and racially abuse me. Boys make fun of me! Girls avoid me! I cannot survive like this.”

Hatred towards people and society start building up in his mind.

“I hate you all.” screams in agony.

Takes out a notebook from his bag and starts writing something.

Riyaan, who’s been keeping an eye on Aman, walks to him, “Hi! Let’s go we’ll have lunch together”.

Aman accepts his invitation.

“Dude! You need to change yourself” he advises.

“I feel pity for you. Is this what you want? Do you want everybody to feel pity for you?”

He continues, “How you present yourself matters. **It’s only good to be ‘good’ when others are good. If they’re bad to you, be worse to them. You’re an easy target for all because you are too kind. Don’t let people take advantage of your kindness. People have the habit of misunderstanding kindness as weakness.**” Advises Riyaan.

Aman, like a good boy, listens to him.

Referring to the English Teacher's incident, "Why didn't you go and complain it to the police or the Chairman?"

"Because it was my fault. You're right. How we present ourselves matter. **How we project ourselves matters more than what we project.** Thanks bro."

Aman continues; "I do not want anybody to feel pity for me. I do not want any sympathy from this selfish society."

"Yes, most importantly, no self-pitying as well!"

### **Eighth standard!**

Aman has a crush on a girl from his class, first crush.

The whole class knows about him having a crush on her.

But, the rude girl doesn't even look at this poor boy.

She thinks he's a poor villager who can't even speak properly.

Not her fault!

The bad boys from his class challenge him to approach the girl.

He walks to the girl confidently and proposes her.

"Have a look in the mirror? You look like a dirty beggar. Disgusting" she makes fun out of Aman while whole class burst into laughter.

He embarrassingly looks at Riyaan who signals him to give a harsh reply to the girl.

"I do see my face every day and that's the reason I've a crush on an ugly b\*tch like you!" is an unexpected response from him and the laughter is much louder this time.

Riyaan gives a high-five to him while the girl turns red.

One of the classmates tries to make fun of him again by calling him, "Bhaiya!"

Aman, to everyone's surprise, slaps the classmate!

"Well! I don't mind being called a Bhaiya as long as your intention is good. Next time if you try to make fun out me, you will not be in a condition to go back to your home." Aman

changes his voice to sound like an evil and says, “Yes, I am the kid your mom has warned you about.”

And gives an evil laugh “Ha! Ha! Ha!”

Riyaan gives a high-five again.

Aman has moved to the last bench and joined Riyaan now.

By the end of eighth standard, he gets himself up well with the last benchers.

Welcome to the gang Aman.

He experiences marijuana for the first time and he loves it.

He has a couple of best friends.

Riyaan, Nayan and Pranav.

Pranav is another last bencher.

While Pranav belongs to a richer family, Nayan is fairly rich and Riyaan and Aman are from middle-class.

Nayan and Pranav are locals of that country.

This neighbour country, where over 80% of the population understand and speak Hindi, is very fond of Bollywood movies and music!

Since all of them are from the same society, they spend most of the times together, even outside the school.

Pranav plays guitar very well and he’s famous for his guitar skill.

Aman and Riyaan like to sing.

Nayan is a bit different.

He is very health conscious and doesn’t smoke up.

He is more into philosophy and Osho, life and wisdom.

Very clean and kind-hearted guy.



“Nayan is one of your true friends.” Mom often tells Aman.

They love jamming-up whenever they get time.

“The man who sold the world”, “Born to be wild”, “Knockin’ on heaven’s door”, “Sweet Child O’ mine”,

The Beatles and smokie “Stumblin in”, “Needles and pins”, “For a few dollars more”, “Help!”, “Let it be”, “Please Mr Postman”, “Hey Jude”,

Bollywood songs like “Dam maaro dam”, “Dil ko tumse pyar hua”, “Mera jeevan kora kaagaz”, “Tujhse naaraz nahi zindagi”,

Non-filmy songs like “Yaaron” by K K, “Dooba Dooba”, “Sayonee”, “Oh Sanam! Mohabbat ki kasam”, Strings “Durr” and so on.

The list is endless.

Nayan listens to country songs, old classics like Tracy Chapman, John Lenon etc.

There are few similarities between these guys which keep them together.

Kind-hearted, no politics, no jealousy, no backbiting.

They’re different.

They’ve their own egos and attitudes.

For people they are unfriendly, swaggers & snooty.

They’re not people’s person.

But, what makes them different is their unbiased nature and intelligence which tells them the importance of being a good person.

Secondly, they don’t only know it but also follow:

“Impress yourself, not others.”

# College Life

## Chapter 1:

2002 to 2004

College! Wow!

I can see the excitement on Riyaan, Aman and Pranav's face as they enter the college.

They're all sixteen plus now.

Typical bad boys who like to have fun, smoke up, bunk classes, create a gang and so on.

They form a gang of 8 people and name it BRAAASSS where each word stands for a name. R for Riyaan, A for Aman, and so on.

Aman is short, 166 cm, slightly above average-looking but as stylish as Riyaan.

Riyaan is outspoken and Aman is quiet and more like a loner.

A taciturn.

They've genuine concerns about each other and they genuinely want to improve themselves as person.

They help each other rectify mistakes and work on weaknesses.

Thanks to their bad boy image and their witty sense of humour, they're quite famous in college.

In front of the college, there is a small tea stall which sells cigarettes, tea and other stuffs.

The lady who runs this stall is nearly 70 years old. This old lady has her own touching story. She's a poor lady estranged by husband for another woman and has a son who's decided to stay separately with his wife.

This small tea stall helps her earn her bread.

Riyaan and Aman make sure to contribute in whatever way they can.

There are two reigning gangs in college.

A gang Aman belongs to, i.e. BRAAASSS and an opponent gang.

They do fight once in a blue moon, however, that doesn't stop them from greeting each other warmly whenever they meet.

One of the friends 'S', from his own gang gets into an argument with Aman and out of frustration insults Aman, "Saale! Bihari. Tu nahi sudhrega." (You bloody Bihari! You will never learn.) Turning him red and embarrassed.

Other friends oppose the guy for his behaviour.

He apologises saying he didn't mean it as he was just kidding.

Aman is sensitive and he didn't enjoy the joke for sure.

Riyaan too gets offended.

They start avoiding the guy.

An 'S' is removed from BRAAASS/S now.

There is a club next to the college.

You can call it a junction for the bad boys, the peddlers and the drug addicts.

This is also a second home to Riyaan.

There is a guy who gets Brown Sugar and distributes it among the students.

The first time he'd got it in college, it was distributed for free.

Then he started charging 50% of the actual cost.

Aman prefers to stay away from it but Riyaan gets trapped into the addiction.

Bunking classes, playing snooker and smoking up have become Riyaan's daily routine.

After a couple of free and discounted doses, the peddler starts demanding more money.

"This is just the initial phase. You better stop here. I am warning you. Marijuana is much better, man" Aman tries to convince but Riyaan ignores him.

Riyaan is under debt now as he's borrowed around 20k from friends.

On top of that, he needs more money to purchase brown sugar.

In crisis, Aman comes forward to rescue him by lending him 25,000/-

“Where did you spend all the money? Why did you not pay the tuition fee that I’d given you?” questions Aman’s father.

Aman is blank.

“Are you into drugs? Look here. Tell me honestly”.

“No! I am not”

“Girls?”

“No! I lost all the money in snooker. We play ‘bet’” replies Aman.

“You spent 25,000/- in snooker? How stupid of you?” shouts the father furiously.

Aman keeps quiet.

Father thinks for a while and replies “Beta! This is wrong. You should be careful while spending. You can ask me for extra money whenever you need. Have I ever said no? Be careful from next time.”

This episode touches Riyaan’s heart.

He thanks Aman for the support and decides to quit Brown Sugar as a token of thanks for Aman.

They’re back to Marijuana.

They’re seniors now.

‘Welcome Party’ organized by seniors for their juniors.

“Hey! Look at that girl. Look at her moves! Man! She’s damn hot.” Points out Riyaan.

Aman looks at her and gets glued.

She’s a girl from new batch. Akansha.

She’s cute. Stylish. Superb dancer. Charming.

In fact, I can see she’s grabbed attention of many guys, Riyaan and Aman are not the only admirers.

Loads of fun. What a party. Dj, concert, games.

And needless to say, what a performance by Pranav.

As a part of function, there are couple of awards like: best dancer and potential face of the college.

No prize for guessing who wins both the awards.

Akansha.

“Hey, get up! It’s 8:00 am”, Pranav wakes Aman up while mother serves tea.

Since they stay nearby, Pranav spends most of his time with Aman.

They’re like a family.

Pranav is quite popular amongst the parents.

They find him disciplined and down to earth.

They continue with the same boys-talk, like, how to approach Akansha?!

What are the challenges he may face etc.

Riyaan and Pranav give him their opinion.

Aman is famous in college but definitely not in a ‘good boy’ list.

He’s famous for his unethical behaviour, bunking classes, getting into fights, arguing with the professors etc.

As a result, he doesn’t have the confidence to approach Akansha.

**“If you want to climb the mountain, you must get rid of acrophobia”**, enlightens Riyaan.

Riyaan encourages him to approach her.

However, not confident with his image at college, especially amongst girls, Aman refuses to accept Riyaan’s suggestions.

Riyaan thinks for a while and comes up with an idea.

As per the plan, Riyaan would make Akansha his phone-friend and introduce himself as some random guy Akash.

Once he’s able to impress her over the phone, he would then reveal the secret.

Aman thinks it sounds good and gives a green signal.

“Let me cut it short. I am Akash and I got your phone number from one of my friends. I was wondering if we could be friends.”

Riyaan, the charmer he is, convinces her to be his phone-friend in no time.

He manages to call her every day for an hour or two.

While over the phone he continues to impress her as Akash, in contrast, Aman doesn't stop creating scenes at college by getting into fights and spoil his image.

Riyaan tries to show real Aman to Akansha through Akash.

Within a few weeks, he succeeds to impress her.

It's time for Aman to take over.

Riyaan advises Aman to organise a picnic at college and ask juniors to join them.

They collect 1000/- per head and altogether over 30 students join them including Akansha.

Throughout the picnic Aman tries to hint Akansha that he's Akash by uttering words mostly used by Akash over phone or by mentioning incidents that Akash has already discussed with Akansha.

She does look confused and thoughtful.

They return from the picnic and after calculating the total expenditure Aman notices that they're left with a few thousands.

Aman requests the students to donate these money to the poor lady who owns the tea stall.

Couple of them disagree, Aman returns them their money.

But majority of the students agree to donate the remaining money.

Akansha at the other end is wondering if Aman and Akash are same.

“This is the perfect time to reveal everything to her. Do it!”

Aman somehow collects his guts and reveals the truth to Akansha.

Akansha is disappointed and hurt.

She doesn't want Akash or Aman to call her anymore.

Aman apologises and tries to convince her that though Riyaan is Akash, everything that Riyaan said were Aman's words.

Akash is what Aman is.

Akansha doesn't listen to him and warns him not to call her ever again.

After a couple of months, Aman conveys his feelings to Akansha via an annual college magazine, published by the students.

Wherein he writes a story explaining his whole episode with Akansha in a creative and touching way.

Confident that the article published in college magazine must have helped him clear the misunderstandings with Akansha, Aman calls her up again.

Thankfully, Akansha forgives him.

Aman insists for a movie date, "Have you watched Ek Duj Ke Liye? It's currently running at a theatre? But, nah! I heard it's a boring romantic movie."

"Who told you it's boring?! It's a very touching movie, apparently. I desperately wanted to watch it."

"I see. But not this weekend. We'll go on next weekend. Well! Actually, I don't like watching romantic movies but if you insist, I don't mind. I can give you a company. I mean, I don't want to disappoint you."

"Huh! As if... Ok! But it will be a treat from my end", Akansha puts the condition.

"In that case, I am sorry. We'll go for "Pearl Harbor". The deal is, if we go for your choice of movie, I pay. My choice, you got to pay. What say? Which one?"

"I've already watched 'Pearl Harbor'. Sounds like a strange deal. It's a win-win situation for me. Ek duje ke liye. You got to pay." And she agrees for the movie.

He books a Taxi and picks her up.

It's houseful.

But Aman doesn't want to let this opportunity go.

A ticket-blacker approaches Aman, “pachaas ka do sau, pachaas ka do sau, pachaas ka do sau”. (200/- for 50/-)

“Bro! Can I have two for 300/-?” whispers Aman in his ear.

“No. It’s fixed. Only three more tickets are left. Quick! Do you want it or not?”

Aman had somehow managed to save 600/- for the date.

He’s already spent 100/- Taxi and 50/- Cold drinks and cigarettes.

He buys two tickets in ‘black’ for 400/-

Its interval.

“Would you like to have something?” Asks Aman formally.

“Yes Sure. Cold Coffee.”

“I’ll get it for you. Please remain seated.”

Aman is now left with 50/- .

Walks to the stall but notices that the price for cold coffee is 60/-

He decides to call Pranav, “I’m screwed up! I’d to buy the tickets in ‘black’. I spent all my money. I’m broke! Can you come immediately?”

“I’ll be there in half an hour.” Answers Pranav.

Aman then informs Riyaan about the incident.

“It’s normal. Chill! We’re students. She’ll understand it. And why give a fake impression? Explain her everything. Aman, **it’s very hard to be real. But let’s not give up like everyone else! Let’s be different. Let’s be real.**” Advices Riyaan.

Aman walks to the coffee stall and explains them the scenario.

They give him the coffee for 50/-

He goes back to Akansha and gives her the coffee.



“Why didn’t you have anything for yourself?” Asks Akansha.

Aman decides to tell her everything, “Akansha! My Dad gives me 100/- everyday as pocket money. Out of which I spend 60/- on cigarettes and weed, 30/- I eat meals in canteen and 10/- for tea. My budget has always been very tight. Weed is something I don’t wanna quit, so, I know I’ll have to manage. When you agreed for the movie, I’d told you to postpone it to next weekend. You know why? Because I wanted some time to save money for the date... and all I could save is 600/-. To cut it short, I am broke.”

Akansha is surprised as she didn’t expect such a long explanation!

“It’s ok Aman. You should have told me. I have money. Thank you for everything. You’re so sweet.”

They’re happily dating each other.

Aman has passed out now, he doesn’t get much time to spend with Akansha.

They get to meet once in a week. Sometimes, Aman manages to pick her up after the college.

After a couple of months all of sudden Akansha starts ignoring Aman.

Aman has no idea what she is ignoring him for!

She doesn’t pick up his calls.

Aman is blank! So am I.

It’s 00:30 AM, Nayan knocks the door.

Aman’s parents are surprised to see his friend late night at the door.

“Come Son! Aman is in his room”, Aman’s mother directs Nayan to the room.

“Aman. Man! I need to speak to you. It’s very important”

“Is everything alright? Tell me what the matter is? You could have called me up instead.”

“Yaar! I thought I’d tell you in person. I don’t know how to start. You got to be strong.”

“I am, Dude! But, you’re scaring me. Literally. Come to the point. “

“Yaar! I’m sorry to say this but Akansha is dating someone else.”

“You must be kidding” replies astounded Aman.

He’s speechless.

Hundreds of questions run through his mind within seconds.

“Who’s she dating, btw?”

Nayan tries to avoid eye-contact as he’s ashamed to mention the name but he collects his guts and hesitatingly replies:

“Pranav!”

Aman is at a loss of words.

Nayan tries to pacify him but staggered Aman runs to Pranav’s house at the mid-night.

“Pranav! I didn’t expect this from you. Man! You’ve screwed me up.”

Pranav is guilty and it’s clearly projected on his face, “Sorry! Please punish me. I’m your culprit.”

“Why did u do this to me? I am not hurt because Akansha ditched me. I am hurt ‘coz you betrayed me. I hardly knew her for a year but, man, we were best of friends since 8<sup>th</sup> standard.”

“Please calm down yaar. Listen! I got carried away and I’m really sorry....”

Pranav tries to apologize and explain but Aman doesn’t listen to him.

“It’s all over between us. You’ve taught me a lesson for entire life. Thanks buddy.”

Unable to control his tears, Aman breaks down.

“Yes, I am crying for my best friend. I am crying ‘coz I have lost my best friend.”

Even Pranav starts crying and begs Aman for forgiveness.

“I need you yaar. Don’t leave me man. I am sorry.”

“This is your punishment for betraying me and a punishment to myself for trusting you. You will be missed man. F\*ck you man! Loved you so much!”

A friend in need is a friend indeed.

But Aman, now, has his own version. **“For people, a friend indeed is just for some need”**

Once again hurt, Aman decides not to trust anybody.

“Never ever trust people. There is nothing called a ‘friend’.”

“Girls are opportunists, they are so money minded. Akansha ‘trapped’ Pranav because he’s a rich guy. If only I was richer than him, she would have never left me! I feel like the poorest guy on this earth.”

Riyaan listens to him quietly and lets him take his frustrations out.

“And moreover, Pranav! How could he do this? Friends don’t exist. Nobody is trustworthy.”

Riyaan keeps his hand on Aman’s shoulder and consoles:

“This is life. Congratulations! You’re fortunate enough to experience such incidents in life. It’s only making you stronger.”

“You’re the most important person on this earth, keep in mind. Society doesn’t welcome a loser! Nobody wants to be-friend with a loser! No girls entertain a loser. That’s the reality. Have a look within and find out your importance. If you give-up at this stage, then you’re the biggest loser. If you think Akansha left you for so and so reasons then work on it. Take this experience as a lesson! Be a man. Be strong Aman. If not for others, prove yourself a winner for your own self.”

**“Koi tumse aage nahi nikla, yeh tum ho jise lagta hai ki tum peeche reh gaye!**

**Dekhte ho tum sabko khud se upar, yeh sirf tumhara soch hai ki tum neeche reh gaye”**

(Nobody has overtaken you, it’s you who thinks that you’re left behind. You find everyone superior to you, but the fact is that it’s only your thinking that makes you inferior to them)

The philosopher side of Riyaan?

“And btw, Shivani isn’t bad either. She seems to be interested. You lucky chap! Shall I fix your date with her?” Riyaan tries to pull his leg.

“Ha-ha. Thanks man. Pass me the joint.”

“But make sure her brother doesn’t come to know about it until you’re done. Anyways, I don’t like that rascal.”

Aman seems to have started thinking something.

**“Life is so easy that anybody can live it”,** says Riyaan

**“No! Life is so difficult that nobody knows how to live it”** replies Aman.

“Are you alright? I see you lost these days.” Asked concerned mother.

“Your music expresses your mood. I often hear you listening to Ghazals these days!

“Koi yeh kaise bataaye woh tanha kyu hai...!! Heart-broken?” she tries to sound funny and normal.

Aman knows he can’t hide it from his mom.

He tells her the whole story.

She tries to pacify him and requests to forgive Pranav.

“I know Pranav. He’s a very nice guy. You shouldn’t lose such a good friend.

At this age, such incidents happen. I think you should forgive him.”

“Have you forgiven grandparents?” asks Aman out of frustration.

Mom keeps quiet.

“I am sorry Mom. I didn’t mean it. But now that we’ve started this topic, I request you to apologise to granny and also forgive her from your end. Please Mom.”

“Do you think I am responsible for the separation?” asks Mom.

“No. I didn’t mean that. All I want is, everybody to be together, always.”

Mom doesn’t reply anything.

On relationship note, deciding not to take girls and friends seriously, Aman chooses Riyaan’s path. Have fun. Don’t take them seriously.

Keeping the same in mind, he starts dating Shivani.

Disclaimer: *With due respect to girls, the statements about girls are Aman's personal opinion at this stage and situation. It is requested not to be offended. As a writer, I've a tremendous respect for Women and Girls.*

***A request: Please do not reveal the climax or motto of the book.***

## **Chapter 2:**

Bangalore: 2004-2007

Graduation

Riyaan and Aman get the scholarships for their graduation and are sent to Bangalore.

Pranav and Nayan move to Australia for further studies but in different cities.

Riyaan and Aman are accommodated in an 'international hotel cum hostel' along with 50-60 students from different countries. Yet again, it's a new environment for them. It's a very happening hotel or hostel to be in. Students, both male and female, from 46 countries are lodged into the same hotel.

Students from all over the world who have got scholarships and are admitted to Bangalore University, for example, Africans, Arabians, Russians, Asians and Americans etc. are lodged together.

It's a life time experience to have such a closer look at their life styles, share their experience, and learn their culture and so on.

Riyaan's unique sense of style and his attitude make him quite popular at the hostel.

Girls, party, marijuana and music.

He's enjoying it all.

While a local newspaper finds his styles sense so trendy that they decide to publish a pic of him in the "Style" column.

Riyaan and Aman also give their first ever interview to a local newspaper sharing their experience about Bangalore.

A leading English daily newspaper publishes Aman's picture when he participates in a talent hunt show.

Mostly on weekends, they make a group of 5/6 and go to the pubs or clubs or movies etc.

This weekend they decide to go to a lounge.

Riyaan, Aman and few foreign students from Fiji, South Africa and Maldives join them.

These students get drunk and get into argument with the waiter while paying the bill.

The students claim that they'd ordered only 5 quarters of whiskey, the waiter has billed it for five halves; the waiter stands by his bill and claims that they did order 5 halves.

The argument gets ugly.

Aman and Riyaan are not sure who's right and who's wrong as they didn't notice how much were ordered.

They watch them argue.

"Call the Manager! Who's your manager?" asks a student from Fiji.

The waiter calls the manager.

The manager apologises to the students and not only does he agree to what they claimed but also gives them additional 25% discount as apologies.

All of the students but Aman and Riyaan are happy.

Aman walks to the waiter, "Brother! If I am right, your manager will deduct the money from your salary. How much money will you have to pay from your pocket?"

"Yes, Sir. I'm a poor married guy and have two daughters. I'm the only bread earner."

"Don't worry! Keep this as 'tips'", gives him 200/-

Aman and Riyaan go back to the students, explain them about this poor waiter and request them to pay the full bill.

They collect the money and hand it over to the manager.

"We're sorry! Actually your waiter is right. We'd actually ordered 5 halves. Our fault. It was a great service in fact."

College life for them has always been fun.

Aman and Riyaan, who hardly attend classes, bored, decide to attend a class.

They're surprised to see the amateur professor, who can barely teach, taking the class.

The professor's inefficiency to teach makes Riyaan take a stand.

“Sir, may I have a marker?” Riyaan grabs a marker and walks to the blackboard.

“I’ll explain this topic to the class in a better way”, he starts explaining.

“This is the right way of teaching. Please do not take students for granted.” suggests Riyaan and tries to pass the marker to the Professor.

The professor unable to bear this insult walks out of the classroom and complaints it to the Head of Department, HOD.

“Do you know this is unacceptable? You can be terminated for your misbehaviour?” warns the HOD.

“Sir, students don’t pay huge fees and donations for such quality of education. It is their right to demand a better professor“. Points out Riyaan.

“Oh I see! And how can you judge a professor when you hardly attend any classes? You have no right to judge the professors. Who’re you to judge us?” asks the HOD

“A student. This is the reason I don’t attend classes! And if you continue giving such quality of education then you will hardly see any student in class. And yes, I cannot be terminated for this. In fact, if I escalate it to the chairman then you may get into trouble. It’s not unknown to us that professor’s selection is in your hand. Which means, you’re responsible for the quality. Please change the professor or else I’ll have to escalate it to the Chairman”.

He also hints about the corruption in selection panel and tells the HOD to remove underqualified professors or else he’ll be compelled to take the issue to the Chairman.

Within a week their classmates get a new professor, a better one.

There is an inter-college fashion show competition coming up and Aman seems to be interested in participating.

“Hi guys! I was wondering if I could be a part of this fashion show. I want to walk the ramp”, approaches to the organisers.

“Well! Bro please don’t mind but you’re too short to walk the ramp. We’re looking for 5’10” and above”, replied an organiser.

Aman embarrassingly looks at Riyaan.

Riyaan interrupts, “Bro! How many teams can participate from a college?”

“Max 3 per college. We already have 2 teams, you can try another team. They might give you a chance.” Suggests an organiser.

Riyaan decides to make their own team with the help of a friend who knows a professional fashion designer.

The creative idea that they come up with is to have models of different heights and weights! But they make sure they're presented well.

Their unprofessional looking team becomes their strength.

Not only do they participate, but, thanks to their creativity, models and designer friend, they bag all the major awards of the evening.

Aman walks the ramp as a show stopper and sets a trend.

Even other colleges start following his trend of having a short-heighted model as a show stopper from the following years.



It's a Friday evening:

Aman is smoking up alone in his room, the music is on, and It's Nirvana "My Girl, My girl, don't lie to me... tell me where did you sleep last night....".

Riyaan seems to be getting ready for the weekend party.

"I'll see you later. Bye"

He leaves for the party.



Aman changes the music, I believe its mood-change... “Aye Zindagi Gale Laga Le... Humne Bhi tere harr ik gham ko gale se lagaya hai, hai na?”

At pub, a teetering drunk girl approaches Riyaan despite him being with a lady friend.

She pulls him to a corner, keeps her hands on his shoulder.

“You’re cool. Is she your GF? You deserve a better one dude.”

“You’re right. I deserve someone as hot as you.” Flirts Riyaan while his friend stares at him.

“Free tomorrow?” asks the girl.

“It’s not possible tomorrow. I’ve my final year’s exam ahead.” Cheerfully replies.

They exchange their contact numbers.

It’s time to study now. Two more days to go for the finals.

“Madam, I don’t have any book for your subject and all the books for this subject are taken from library!”, “May I borrow your book?” requests Riyaan.

“Are you kidding me? You’re hardly left with a couple of days and you don’t even have a book?! And as you never attended my class so I’m pretty sure you don’t have any notes as well. Do you?” questioned his teacher.

“I’m sorry Madam. But I’ll manage.”

“How will you manage? I hope at least you will pass my subject, which I don’t think is possible.” and lends him the book.

“Thank you Madam, I’ll try to pass” leaves Riyaan.

Exams are over now.

Aman prefers to stay back at home, write diaries, poems, and chat with Shivani, the girl he’s been dating after Akansha etc.

Shivani: Are you busy?

Aman: No, I am not.

Shivani: Then why are you responding late? Chatting with some other girls?

Aman: No. I was accessing my pages and blogs.

Shivani is a possessive girl who needs a lot of attention and importance, like most of the girls do. Aman has always maintained a distance with her as she's not his love. At the same time, he's not been able to quit her for some reason.

Shivani: You are always busy for me. You can let me know frankly if you don't wanna continue.

Aman: I'm really busy these days. College-room-study. Btw, does your brother know about us?

Shivani: I don't think he does. Why? Are you scared of him?

Aman: lol! But, I do regret.

Shivani: It's ok. It's my fault too. Why do you feel guilty?

It is 3:00 am and Riyaan is not yet back from the pub.

Aman tries to call him but his mobile is switched off.

Thankfully Riyaan knocks the door.

Aman is shocked to see him bleeding.

“What happened? Who hit you? Where were you? “

He applies Dettol and bandages.

“So you went to the pub with that senior guy ‘coz that girl, who you had given your number to, had invited you? And they didn't turn up! What happened next?”



“Since I regularly visit that pub so we decided to get in. The bouncers, however, tried to stop us as it was only for couples. Somehow I managed to convince them. Later, while we were having drinks, a couple of bouncers came and asked us to leave the floor and join the stags. I got into an argument with them. The manager came in. I thought he would be by my side but even he started advising me saying we cannot break the terms and conditions of the pub.”

“Don’t you think they were right? You could have apologized and left the venue.”

“I took it personal and punched the Manager. No prize for guessing, the bouncers attacked me.”

“And how about the guy you went to the pub with? And why is your mobile off?”

“He ran away the moment I punched the Manager. I fought with dozens of the bouncers alone. And guess what Aman, I even thrashed couple of them. The mobile’s battery is over. Let me recharge it”

“Happens! New experience. Cheers!” laughs Aman and hugs him.

They plan to take revenge.

“We’re two. We cannot fight with them alone. We’ll have to target them one by one.”

They to go to the pub and spy on the bouncers.

They wait in the parking area for the bouncers to come.

“Aman. There he comes. He’s the supervisor” points Riyaan to a tall (approx. 6’5”) well-built man.

“Cool. Get ready. Tie the Helmet tightly. Wear the knuckle and get ready.”

Aman attacks the bouncer with helmet. Riyaan backs him up by punching the bouncer with knuckles.

They both succeed to thrash the bouncer with helmet & knuckle and run away from the spot.

Results are out.

Riyaan tops the subject that the teacher had challenged him for, with a huge margin. However, he’s not the class topper.

Riyaan likes to surprise. He has the habit of studying at the last moment.

Ask him anything, even basic questions, a couple of days prior to his exam and he wouldn't know the answer!

It's natural for students to get surprised as they know he never attends class and knows nothing!

"How does he manage to score good when he doesn't know anything?!"

Another classmate says, "I think he projects himself bindaas and cool as if he doesn't study at all but reality is, he studies a lot."

"You're the real topper of class. Why don't you take 'study' seriously?" compliments the teacher who'd told him to at least manage to pass her subject.

"Thank you Ma'am. I don't believe in ranks. I set a target for myself and don't care whether I rank first or last in class as long as I achieve my target. If my target is 70% and I achieve it, then that's it for me. I compete myself, not others."

"You see, that's my point. For you to score 70%, all you need is a couple of days of preparations! Add a couple of more days and you can easily top. Study should be your aim and rank should be your target. Wish you good luck."

Bangalore Railway Station (Name changed)

Riyaan and Aman go to see off their friends.

Riyaan can't believe his eyes when he sees a person hanging with the rod of the train-door as the train speeds up.

This man seems to have slipped off while boarding.

He's somehow managed to keep a hold of the rod while his body is flying in air like a balloon.

Everyone is helplessly watching him trying to keep a hold of the rod.

Riyaan, without giving a second thought, runs towards the man.

"LEAVE THE ROD NOW", he jumps over the man, holds his waist tightly and dives into opposite direction.

Thank God!

Had he not left the rod at the exact time or had there been a slight mistiming; we could have lost two lives, including Riyaan's.

“Well done!”, “Superb bro!”, “Great job man!” appreciations shower from the watchers for his jaw-dropping and heroic act.

After completing Graduation, Aman and Riyaan return back to their hometown before deciding to pursue masters.

On family part, once again Aman visits his grandparents before flying back and tries to convince his grandparents to come back, but they refuse.

Ego-clash! Mother-Son ego-clash!!

“I know where my destination is, but, the question is how to?” asks concerned Aman.

“What’s your dream in life?” questions Riyaan.

“To fulfil my Mom’s dream.”

“And, what’s her dream?”

“Every mother’s dream is the same.”

“Make a note of your dreams in bold letters in your mind and keep reminding yourself of it. **For anybody to rise in life it’s important to fall in love. Fall in love with your dreams. Fall in love with your work.** For you to achieve your dreams you must do what you love doing.” Suggests Riyaan.

Aman makes a note of the talents that he possess.

- a) I am a good planner
- b) I like writing
- c) I can play chess, cricket, snooker etc.
- d) I can sing

“Good. Think and utilize your skills.”

### **Chapter 3:**

Chennai 2007 to 2009/10:

Post-Graduation:

Riyaan and Aman, fortunately, get another scholarship under another scheme and are sent to Chennai to pursue their Masters.

So once again they're back to college.

First day at college.

"Hey you! Come here." A senior calls Aman to rag him.

"I'll catch you later. I'm in a rush."

One of the seniors gets offended and tries to stop Aman.

"We're your seniors. Have some respect."

Aman doesn't utter a word, he just stares rabidly at the senior and leaves.

"Well Done. But we could have gone to them. I am sure they wouldn't have harmed us"

"I didn't like their tone. And I am against ragging. That's it."

Aman and Riyaan rent a room near college.

Riyaan is mostly busy either on his mobile flirting with girls or listening to music.

Aman is busy making future plans.

The next day Aman notices a very pretty girl in the cafeteria.

Wow! Look at her smile. Amazingly pretty.

Aman is attracted yet again. So am I. She's the prettiest girl of the college.

She's a simple girl, an MBA final year student.

Extremely popular in college for her beauty and good behaviour.

She is kind and sweet.

Am I falling in love with her?

Who wouldn't?

Aman is on his way to computer lab which is on the first floor.

He takes the stairs.

He sees the same pretty girl coming downstairs.

They cross each other.

After a couple of steps, Aman looks back at the girl and so does the girl.

Eye-contact for a second or two and his gaze slowly moves towards her lips.

Did she just turn back and look at Aman?

“Yesssss! Thank you Jesus” He’s so excited. OMG!

There are few seniors from their country who know Riyaan.

“Bro! There is a girl, I don’t know her name but she’s damn pretty man. You being my senior, got to help me introduce to her.”

“Oh! I believe you’re taking about Alima. Is she the one?” the senior points to a girl.

“Yes. It’s her” replies excited Aman.

“Bro! She’s from final year. And you’re not the only guy who’s attracted towards her. Even I am in queue” replies senior in a funny tone.

“Oh! Final year! Is she single?”

“Yes. We believe so. There are few senior guys who have proposed her in past but she didn’t show any interest. You better find someone else. She won’t give you any lift. And mind you, she’s from a different religion. So be careful of the guys from her community.”

Aman looks at Riyaan and gives a mysterious smile.

“What say?”

“Go for it. All the best.” Signals Riyaan.

She stays in girl’s hostel of the college.

Aman notices Alima entering the Computer Lab. He waits for a few minutes, enters the lab and sits next to her.

“Hi! May I know what the password of this computer is? I am new to the college. First year.”

“The password is ‘STUDENT’ in capital.” She replies.

“Thank you” smiles Aman.

Alima leaves the lab in fifteen minutes and so does Aman to follow her to the cafeteria.

The seniors who know Riyaan are at cafeteria, Alima joins them.

“Aman. Come here. You wanted me to introduce you to her, right? Come, meet her. She’s Alima. He’s my friend Aman. He was insisting me to introduce him to you”.

Aman is nervous and embarrassed.

He didn’t expect the senior to introduce him to her in this manner.

The seniors leave in a couple of minutes, “We’re running late for the class. You guys carry on”.

Aman gets the opportunity to talk to her.

He’s still nervous and now blushing.

“So how’s the college treating you so far? Did you like it?” She tries to ease him.

“Yes. Beautiful. Alima give me a moment, I’ll be right back.”

Aman calls up Riyaan as he’s too nervous to talk.

Riyaan gives him tips and encourages him to express everything.

“Sorry, I’d to make a call.”

Then he starts as if he’s mugged up the whole dialogue and he would miss the train if he didn’t finish it in a minute!

“I’ve a huge crush on you. I am really attracted towards you. I know these things are not new for you as you might have been told the same by many other guys. But though my words are the same, I am entirely different. I am a straight forward person and trust me I am very kind hearted. I don’t know who’s your Mr. Right but all I can assure you is I am not a Mr. Wrong.”

Oh! I didn’t know Aman can actually talk!

Alima is surprised. How can someone be so straight forward at the very first meeting!

Aman continues, “Please give me a chance Alima. I won’t let you down. I can’t promise you that we’d marry but I can promise you best times with me. Something we will cherish for entire life. Promise Alima.” Aman expresses his feelings honestly.

“I’ve studied in a Girl’s school. Then I joined Girl’s College. This is my first co-ed college. I am not used to for such approach. I am not the right girl for you.” She smiles and leaves.

Aman keeps waiting for her in the cafeteria.

He is certain that she’d come again after attending her class but she doesn’t come.

He waits the whole day.



Finally she comes at 9:30 pm for dinner.

“Hi Alima!”

“Hey! How come you’re here at this time?”

“I wanted to eat fried rice from canteen, I love the fried rice of this canteen. I stay nearby. It’s hardly 5 minutes’ walk from here.”

“Oh! I see. Cool. Carry on”

“Can we dine together?”

“But I prefer it in my room with my roommate”

“Ok. No problem! Would you mind accompanying me while I finish dining?”

She seems to be in dilemma but nods.

“Sure.”

What should he talk now?

He wants to go on and on but he has no idea how to start.

“Alima!”

“Yes Aman. (There is a silence) I am late. Shall I leave now?”

“No. Please wait. Today morning, I told you that I’ve a crush on you but actually it’s not.”

“Thank God.” Replies Alima.

Aman adds, “I am sure it’s more than a crush”

She blushes. It’s an encouragement for Aman.

He starts talking. He talks about everything.

His life, his family, his ex-gfs and even his present GF Shivani and blah blah blah.

“Sir, the cafeteria shuts down at 12:00 AM usually, it’s already 00:30”, informs a staff.

“Would you mind sharing your contact number?” Aman asks before leaving.

“Sure. But do not take it otherwise. We can be only friends.” she gives him her number

“Alima. Lastly, before I leave. You’re senior to me and the family and community that you belong to, I know we don’t have a future. I know you will get married in a year or two. But I don’t want to miss you. If I am right, we’re attracted towards each other. But, for the next 5 yrs. I am not in a position to commit. Keeping our interest in mind and being practical at the same time, would you mind having a contractual relationship with me?”

“What? Contractual relationship? What’s that? And who told you that I am attracted? And btw how could you even ask me for such crap? OUR INTEREST?! Seriously? You seem to have lost your mind Aman.”

“I am just being practical. We’d get into a relationship and be committed to each other until you get married. I won’t disturb you ever. You can marry as per your parents’ choice. But until then why not give ourselves a chance? And as I said, I already have a GF. Means, you can be assured that I won’t get possessive or crazy about you.”

“Please leave Aman. I thought you’re actually a nice guy but I didn’t know you’ve got such a dirty mind. Do you think I’d get into a relationship for time pass? And that too with a guy who already has a Girlfriend! Are you serious?”

“It’s not a time-pass relationship. Well! I am not able to explain you but it’s like **‘love is not only about spending life together’ even a moment spent in love together is reason enough for us to be happy**. So, I just want to collect the moments with you. The lovely moment that I can cherish. It’s like, you’re the girl I’d love to be with as long as I can. Trust me, with me, you will spend the best times. I want to be with you, I want to give you a lot of love as long as I can, I want to hug you and cry with you. I want to share everything you.”

“Insane! It’s hardly been a couple of days since I saw you. It’s hardly been a day we spoke and you’re talking bullsh\*t like love!”

“I am not sure what it is. But I promise you it will not trouble you ever. The moment I saw you, I knew you’re the one. However, practically, many factors come into picture. When I realized that we don’t have any future together, this is all I could think of. I call it contractual because regardless of what we feel for each other, we will stop the moment we wish to. You can marry whoever you or your parents wish to. But please be my love until you find your life partner! Give me a chance to show you how much love you deserve. Please accept my proposal and make me feel like the best person on this earth. This is all I can say. I will never bother you again. I am going to delete your number. If you decide to give me a chance then please message me or call me on this number. (Aman writes his number on her mobile) I will take that as your ‘Yes’, if I don’t receive any msg or call from you then I’ll consider it a ‘NO’ and never ever get back to you. Promise.” Leaves Aman.

Aman was emotional but genuine.

She is the kind of girl any guy would love to be with.

Open relationship, Ok. But contractual relationship?

What's that? Let's get into a relationship for 2 years and then we part our ways!

Sounds horrible but interesting.

I tell you this 21<sup>st</sup> century!

Will she accept his strange proposal?

The same question is running in Aman's mind.

It's been two days, he's not received any message or call from her.

They do cross each other sometimes at college but Aman decides to ignore her completely and so does she.

Though Aman keeps an eye on her, he pretends as if he doesn't even know her when they happen to cross each other.

Next step, Aman has to disappear for a couple of days.

It's the 4<sup>th</sup> day now.

Aman has not been to the college from last two days.

Music is on and loud.

"Get up stand up! Stand up for your right.... Get up stand up! Don't give up the fight"

It's Bob Marley, Aman's one of the favourites.

Besides, he's working on his laptop, seems to be writing something.

The phone rings. He hears a message tone in his mobile.

It's a random message forwarded to Aman.

But wait! Who's the sender?

It's from Alima.

Aman runs towards Riyaan to show him the message.

"Is it a Yes? What do you say?"

“Congratulations! Though it’s a random message, I think you can take it as a hint or a yes. But remember, she’s just a point you want to prove to yourself.”

“I do remember it.”

Aman, unable to control his excitement, calls up Alima.

“Hi Aman” she picks up the call and replies.

“I can’t believe it. Please don’t say it was just a random message. Please don’t say it was a mistake. Please don’t say you sent it randomly”

“Stop! Stop! Aman! Control. No it was not sent randomly though it was a random message”

“Oh Jesus. My Lord. Thank you so much. Alima, I am so happy. I’ll be at cafeteria in 5 mins. Be there. See you.”

The love blooms. I mean contractual love.

Seniors start calling Aman a ‘Cheetah’/ “Panther” fondly, referring to Alima’s case, as he was very fast.

Aman, anyways, never attends classes but thanks to him even Alima has started bunking classes.

They’re always seen together in cafeteria.

Despite being from a strict and conservative background Alima doesn’t mind spending hours with Aman in cafeteria and his room.

Students from her community have been keeping an eye on them.

Aman is called to the Director’s cabin, “You’re spoiling the whole college-environment. Please keep in mind, it’s a college and you should follow the etiquettes. You got to keep this relationship outside the college.” warns the college Director to Aman.

Alima, meanwhile, through her roommate, comes to know that few seniors are planning to thrash Aman.

She informs Aman immediately and asks him to be careful and stay alert.

“Don’t worry Alima. I’ll handle it.”

Aman informs Riyaan about these seniors intention and asks him to stay alert.

Riyaan types a message in Aman's mobile, sends it to an unknown number and shows the message to Aman.

They both give mysterious smile.

"You know I like you so much because you're a bad boy!"

"Oh! In that case, I've a friend worse than me, I'm sure you will fall in love with him."

She breaks into laughter.

"What if we actually fall in love? Will you marry me?"

"Don't worry! I am practical enough to not to fall in love. And yes, in case we do then you got to wait for 5 years at least. You know nah baby, I am not in a position to get married."

"I know. It was just a random question though"

Alima likes everything about Aman but she hates smokers.

Despite letting him know that she doesn't like smokers, he doesn't quit marijuana.

Alima decides to insist him to quit it.

"Aman, promise me you will not smoke up."

"I can't promise you. In fact, I don't wanna quit it."

"Remember? You had promised me the best days with you? And, I believe my days with you would be the best only if you quit smoking. If you genuinely care about me and if you are a man of words then please quit it."

"That's emotional blackmail. But Ok, I'll try."

"That's my good boy."

She recalls, "Hey! You'd told me that you have a girlfriend. What is she doing now? Are you still in touch?"

"Yes. We're in touch but she's in The US pursuing her graduation. It's been over a year since we met"

One of Alima's friends interrupts them.

They welcome her half-heartedly.

Alima doesn't like any girl talking to him, she's a possessive girl.

"Nice wristband Aman" she compliments.

After a few minutes she leaves saying "I don't want to interrupt. Carry on"

"Thank God!" whispers Alima in relief.

Meanwhile, Aman receives a call from his Dad saying he'd be visiting Chennai the next weekend.

Dad also informs that the grandparents have finally forgiven him and agreed to move back.

Aman is very happy as he'd been waiting for this day for years.

He calls up grandparents immediately and thanks them.

He then asks Alima, "My Dad is coming next weekend. Are you interested in meeting him?"

"Wow. I would love to. But I am afraid. Would he like me or not?"

"Come on! He's a dude. Don't have to be scared of him"

They both arrive to the hotel his Dad is accommodated at.

"Salaam!" Greets Alima.

"Beautiful. I never knew my son is so talented", compliments Dad.

They have formal conversation about family, future plans etc.

"Thank you for taking care of my son. You know, he's very sensitive."

Alima smiles in reply.

Dad is completely impressed by Alima.

He even starts planning their wedding somewhere in his mind!

Aman and Alima are back to the room.

His Dad has returned back.

"Your Dad is such a wonderful person, you know"

"I know. I am one lucky guy"

“You are. And you’re not even 25% of as good looking as your Dad”

“Well! I know that as well”

“He was looking so smart in black suit. But you know what! Black doesn’t suit you at all”

“Oh! I didn’t know that!”

Alima kisses him on his cheek, “And you’re very sweet.... and thank you for quitting weed..... (Kisses on nose) and my shona is very naughty.... (Kisses on chin) and your wife will be so lucky... and she’ll be lucky to have such in-laws.... And I wish I was that lucky girl” she gets emotional and starts crying.

“Hey Alima! Please stop it. What’s this? Please don’t cry. What are you crying for?”

“I am sorry. I don’t know what I am crying for. Seriously, why am I crying?”

“Let’s get married. Now. No! Wait. We can’t get married now as I need to rush to the washroom. I’ll pee and come and then will get married”, he succeeds in changing her mood.

She grabs his mobile and starts playing some game.”

After a while she asks, “Can I have your wristband?”

Aman gives her the wristband, she keeps it in her purse.

Its weekend, 1:20 am.

As usual, Riyaan has gone to the pub.

Aman decides to walk to a restaurant and get something to eat which is about 500 meters away and is open 24hrs due to Ramazan / Ramadan, a Muslim festival.

On his way, he sees a street boy sleeping on the road under a fly-over bridge. Half naked.

He walks back to his room and gets a couple of shirts and a blanket for him.

He hands it over to the boy.

“Shukraan Bhaijaan!” The boy thanks him.

Aman takes out a note of 100/- gives it to the boy, “Ramzaan Mubarak bhaijaan! Please go and have Biryani for yourself!”

“He’s the one. Catch him. Hey wait. You rascal. You think you’re a big star! Hero? “

Before Aman could realise anything a dozen of bikes loom up and he finds himself surrounded by dozens of people.

“Come here! Bastard! Hey, take off his pants and click his pictures. We’ll post these pictures on college sites.”

One of the guys tries to touch him.

“Mind your language Dude! And dare you touch me. You’ve no idea you’re inviting a big trouble for yourselves”, warns Aman.

“Oh beh\*\* ch\*d! Really? I like your courage man. Hats off.”

“Abbe chu\*iye! You’re surrounded by 18 people at this time, under this fly-over and you still have the courage to warn us back! Amazing! Saala psycho.”

Few of them try to push him, while few try to click pictures.

But before it could get ugly, Aman stops them.

“Stop it guys! Just have a look at this message before you thrash me.”

He takes the mobile out of his pocket and hands it over to the gang leader.

“What’s this?”

“Please read the message carefully. I’ve sent it to my Cop uncle, Superintendent of Police.”

**“SP Uncle,**

**I am in trouble. I’ve received a threat from the below mentioned guys. If anything happens to me then these guys will be responsible”**

“What the f\*ck is this? And why have you mentioned our names?”



“Now, if anything happens to me or even if I get a scratch, I’ll walk directly to the police station and get you all arrested. You see the proof, don’t you? Here onwards, not only will you give up the idea of beating me but also protect me from others because if anything happens to me then police is going to catch you!” reminds Aman with a smile of victory on his face.

**“Guys! Keep in mind, the real strength doesn’t lie in arms or numbers but in brains.”**

“We’ll see you later. This guy is crazy. Let’s go. Will catch him later.”

Riyaan and Aman are called to the Director’s cabin again:

“I’m sorry to inform you but you will not be allowed to write the exam as your attendance is too low and you’re not eligible. You may leave Aman.” informs the Director.

“Sir! I am sorry but I need a chance. Please consider it”

“This is not the first time that you have been called to my cabin. I know you’re a bright student but you don’t seem serious about study. I have received many complaints about you.”

“Sorry Sir! I promise I’ll attend classes regularly from next semester.”

“I’ll have to speak to the chairman. It’s out of my control now.”

“Thank you Sir. And I am sorry again.”

“Listen! You’re on a wrong track Aman. I thought you’re a bright student and you would set good examples for others.”

The Director gives him a last warning and considers his appeal.

Alima is done with her college.

She starts working in an MNC as an HR manager.

However, out of her busy schedule, she still manages to spend her entire week offs with Aman and share her corporate-world experience with him.

## Chapter 4:

Now that Alima has left the college, Aman finally gets the time to attend classes and interact with his classmates.

Riyaan too starts attending classes.

There is a senior person, Mr. Kumar, his classmate, who's studying on scholarship and is a Govt. registrar by profession.

He's not only among the toppers but also a very down to earth, friendly and calm person.

And, there is a computer practical lab madam.

She's a huge crush on Riyaan. Ahem! Ahem!

There are students from all over India, including few foreign students.

It's a college that has both computer science and MBA students pursuing their masters.

Aman, along with Riyaan, starts participating in college events and also starts contributing to the college.

Aman wins Essay competition while Mr. Kumar stands a runner up.

They organize intra-college polls and competitions like Chess.

They start a new polling in college which can help collect feedback about college, its cafeteria and professors.

The polling is divided into two sections:

First section includes college, food & canteen, professor related feedback, message for Director and changes you want to see and you don't want to see in college

The second part includes Student related section: Best personality, best hairstyle, most popular, Mr. Funny and so on.

While Riyaan is voted for most stylish, and Mr. Cool, Aman is voted as face of the college and Best Hairstyle.

Moreover, Aman also wins the chess competition by defeating an MBA student in the final.

The MBA students are not happy with their activities & popularity and try to tarnish their image by spreading rumours that the polling was not fair, the results were wrong etc.

On the other hand, the Director is happy to get the feedback about college and receive messages from students.

The Director visits each class to announce that he's received the feedback and will start working on it.

He also compliments and thanks Aman for making it happen.

The Director who was almost fed up of him, now, doesn't hesitate to call him a genius and give his example to the MBA students, whenever gets a chance.

Riyaan notices that computer science students are not given equal participation in college activities like welcome party, farewell party, sports week etc.

He notices hardly 20% of the participation from computer science.

"Why are computer science students not participating in Sports and other activities?"

"Da! It's an MBA student's dominated college. They're the organisers. They decide and select the performers. We're just audience", complains his classmate.

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"My parents are seeking for a groom" informs Alima

"Congratulations! You deserve a perfect husband and I am sure you will get one"

"Are you not sad? Won't it hurt you? Don't you feel for me at all?"

"Why would I be sad?! We started on a clear note that we don't have a future together. I'm prepared for it." Aman clarifies in a normal tone.

Riyaan, however, has a gut feeling that Aman has fallen in love with Alima and so has she.

"Yaar. Are you sure you're not in love with her?"

"Yeah! I'm pretty sure. You know me dude. I won't repeat the same mistake again."

"Is this the reason you don't wanna accept that you are in love or ..."

“No man. Seriously. I mean I like her. She’s very caring. I love spending time with her. She makes me feel comfortable and I can comfortably be at my worst. That’s it.”

“Isn’t that love? Aman, either accept the fact that you have not changed a bit even after Akansha’s case or just let her go. Keep in mind love doesn’t exist. Love, feelings, loyalties are bullsh\*t.”

“Thanks for reminding but I am serious when I say I am not in love with her. How can I forget that love doesn’t exist? We’re just attached to each other.”

“And how about Alima? Are you sure she’s not in love yet? Are you sure she’s also so called ‘practical enough’ like you? How can you be so selfish?”

“I am sure she’s not in love. I have been reminding her of our contract.” (He thinks for a while) “Man! Actually, I am confused. I’m not sure if I love her but I know she’s the girl I would love to spend my life with.”

“I knew it. So you want to start a family now? Have kids? And how about our plans?”

“Right. I do not want to get distracted. There is no place for anyone in my life until I prove myself.... I think I need to take psychiatrists help.”

Riyaan tries to pacify saying “Psychiatrist wouldn’t understand your situation. Waste of time.”

Aman tries to divert the topic and asks, “Anyways, how about implementing our plan?”

“We have 500+ followers on one of our pages. There are over 8000 followers and friends in other pages that we run. I’ve also posted Ads on a couple of sites.”

“And what subject did you select for the Ad?”

“Brain for sale!”

“Not bad!”

A call from Dad.

“Listen! I want you to get married to Alima. She’s a perfect girl for you. I’m impressed.”

“Dad, do you even know what you’re talking about? In fact, I am not serious. How can I even think of getting married at this age and position?”

“I’ll speak to her parents. At least you can get engaged now. I know you want to be financially independent but you won’t get other girl like her. Get engaged, you can decide to get married once you’re settled“

“Firstly, her parents won’t allow her marry me due to caste and community reasons, as she belongs to a conservative family. Secondly, her parents won’t wait for another 3/4 yrs. And most importantly, you know I’ve been dating many girls, I’m still dating Shivani. If I had to be serious with Alima then I wouldn’t be dating her, but I am. And she knows it. It proves that I’m not serious about her”, he tries to convince Dad.

The next day he receives a call from Shivani.

“Who’s Alima? Answer me” asks furiously.

“How did you get to know about Alima?”

“You were cheating on me. I didn’t expect it from you. You know I loved you so much.”

“I am sorry Shivani. Even you know I never loved you. I will explain you in detail. Please calm down.”

“There’s nothing to explain. Whenever you told me that you don’t love me, I thought this is how you are. But now I got to know that you actually never loved me.”

“Correct. When ‘S’, your brother, insulted me, I was hurt. He was a good friend of mine and I didn’t expect him to insult me racially. When I broke up with Akansha I was frustrated again and decided not to trust anybody. How can I fall in love again? On top of that Pranav’s betrayal! I was completely broken. Out of frustration I approached you. I thought you could help me come out of it and at the same time I could take a revenge with your brother.”

“How mean! You didn’t think of me even once?”

“I did. I thought even you’d be looking for a short-term fun, like majority of people do these days. My intention was to date you and let your brother know it. But, when I realised that you seem serious, I started keeping a distance with you. I did think of you and that’s the reason I’ve maintained the respect and distance with you. That is why I always hinted you about us not having a future. I never showed you any extra care or fake love to misguide you. But yes, I am sorry for whatever I did.”

“Your Alima had called me; she explained me everything. Congratulations. You have lost me Aman. Goodbye.” she hangs up the phone.

“Why did Alima have to call her? What’s her intention? ”, thinks and decides to meet her.

“Why did you call her? You’re such a loser, you’re jealous.”

“Yes I am jealous. I don’t want you to have other girlfriend. Yes, I am possessive about you. I don’t know why I feel bad when you talk about Shivani. I have no idea why I can’t even imagine you with some other girl. But this is it.”

“Alima! I’d told you. No love and feelings. And we’d promised that we wouldn’t interfere in each other’s life.”

“I don’t care. As long as you’re with me, you are all mine. I know I don’t have the right to be possessive... but...”

Aman hugs her and kisses her on forehead.

“Let’s run away. Will you? I am serious. My parents will never allow me marry outside religion. I am earning enough and you too will start a job after few months. We can survive easily.”

“You’re very courageous. I salute you. I don’t wanna sound like a loser but I admit I am a loser who’d lose you someday. Losing you is our gain. I’ve my own plans in my head, my own goals. I don’t want to get distracted from it.”

“What’s your goal? Is it more important than me?”

Aman prefers to keep quiet.

“I can never understand you. And listen my parents have fixed a meeting with a guy who’ll be coming this Sunday to see me. Please think again before it’s too late. Don’t be stubborn Aman”.

“Riyaan. I am confused. Career or her?” he bumbles helplessly.

“Oh! I thought you were practical. You were just attached.”

“Of course I am. You don’t have to be sarcastic.”

Riyaan tries to sympathize “It’s natural to get attached after spending two years together. You have got a long way to go. You’re distracting yourself. Love looks good only in stories. In reality career is above all. Practically, what’s the use of such love when you can’t keep your love happy? Moreover, she was a challenge for you, that’s it. Now that you’ve proven yourself in her case, it’s time to let her go. Be focused dude.”

“Thanks man. But I am sure to miss her. She is a sweetheart. She’s indeed given me the moments that I’ll cherish my entire life.”

“Chill yaar. I know it’s gonna be tough for you but this is life. You gotta be strong”, suggests Riyaan.

“By the way we have separate directors now for Computer and MBA. Did you get to know about the new additional MBA director who is against combined farewell party? Apparently, he’s asked the MBA students to conduct a separate party and let Computer science students conduct their separate party!” he informs.

“As if I care” Aman replies.

“You should bro. This could be our next and a bigger challenge! Do not let it go.”

Aman starts thinking.

Meanwhile, Riyaan receives a call from an unknown number.

“I saw your Ad. It sounds interesting. You seem to be an ambitious guy. Would you like to work with us?”

“Who is this? What kind of work is it?”

“I am calling from Mumbai. It’s a small work but you will be paid huge. All you need to do is collect the packets of medicine from us and hand it over to our foreign clients.”

“Oh! You mean to say, some illegal stuff or so called medicine?”

“No. No. No. It’s a ‘Ayurveda’ medicine. The normal price in market is pretty high and we sell it in a lower cost. That’s it. We have foreign customers. You can fix your selling price.”

“Sorry! But if you read my Ad carefully, it’s mentioned clearly that ‘I am a sharp thinker who wants to work for good and transparent cause. Also, I do not intend to get into anything which is against law.’”

“Ok. Then let me put it this way. You can easily earn in lacs per deal.”

“Thanks buddy. But not interested.”

The caller loses his control, “You don’t have the balls bro! Accept it.”

“May be you’re right from your point of view but from my point of view I find people like you cowards. You do not have the guts to walk on the right path. Losers!” Riyaan hangs up the phone.

They realise that it’s hard to convince people until you have a brand, a name.

**“People take you seriously when you have a name and a position. But for you to have a name and position you must take your goals seriously.”**

“We lack dedication, planning and evidence.” Complains Aman in frustration.

“It takes time man. Patience! Rome was not built in a day. I think this new Director’s case can add another feather.”

Riyaan tries to whip Aman into a new challenge.

At college, in them, students from Computer Science see a hope.

“Hey da! You know there is a new director. He doesn’t like computer science students. He believes in divide & rule.” A student informs Aman.

“This new Director is disgusting. Apparently, he owns pubs and invites female students to the pub. He’s one spoilt rich old man” informs another student.

“Da! This time MBA will have a separate welcome and farewell parties. The Director has told them to organise it separately. Our strength is too less to organise a separate party. I don’t think we are in a position to organise separate party.”

“This Director’s case is not only an opportunity for us to take a stand but will also help us get the equal rights for computer science students”.

They start collecting feedback from the students.

They discover that while over 70% of the students are against the new director, there are about 20% who support him. Remaining preferred not to give any comment.

A group of students, the organisers from MBA, approach Aman.

“Bro! We need your help. As you know, the new Director doesn’t want us to have a combined farewell, it’s impossible for us to conduct separate parties keeping the strength of students and activities in mind.”

Aman looks at Riyaan, Certainly, they don’t want to let this opportunity go.

“So, how may I help you?”

“Since he’s MBA’s director we don’t want to go against him openly. If you could help us by complaining it to the Chairman, it would be a great help. You’re from computer science stream so it won’t affect you.”

Riyaan laughs at them and asks “Man! Have a look at my forehead. Do you see ‘chu\*iya’ written anywhere?”, “I know what the situation is. We will help you but we’ll do it our way. You got to just watch.”

Riyaan explains further, “We’ll have a combined farewell party. But this time we, computer science students, will organise it. I assure you full participation from MBA. Let me keep it straight bro. As of now, this college is mainly dominated by MBA students. I want equal rights for computer science students. This year we’ll take the full ownership and from next



year both MBA and Comp Science will have equal participation and rights. This is our condition.”

The MBA students discuss among themselves and agree to the condition as they’re sure new director will not allow this party.

“Does he take any lecture? If yes, when is his period?”

“Yes, he teaches us Economics. We’ve his lecture tomorrow 2<sup>nd</sup> period”.

Aman informs, “Guys! We’ll have the farewell party on 15<sup>th</sup> of next month. I want few students from MBA who can perform on stage. Rest of the interested MBA students can participate anonymously. I assure you this director will be out of the college by then. You can convey the message to your classmates. We do need your active participation until he’s out.”

Aman and Riyaan enter the Economics class with a couple of other classmates “Excuse me Sir! We’ve an announcement to make, if you permit.”

“Yes, go ahead”. Permits the Director.

Aman continues, “Folks! As we know the farewell party has approached. It may sound strange that despite being seniors, we’re going to be a part of organising farewell party for our own selves!”

“Due to some circumstances, we, the seniors, have decided to take over the organising committee. We announce, 15<sup>th</sup> of the next month we’re going to organize a farewell party. Both MBA and Comp Science students together will be participating in the event. Here, I would also like to remind you all that these kind of activities are meant for uniting the students and not dividing. I reckon, these activities are organized by students, where lecturers, staffs and professors are invited to be a part of the event as guests. These activities have always been organised by and for students and will remain so. I request you all to participate in it and take a stand. If you want, you can participate anonymously.”

“Sir! It will be an honour for us to show you our talent” taunts Riyaan at the Director.

“I am busy on 15<sup>th</sup> but I will see if I can manage. Thanks.” Replies the Director with a red face.

The new Director sticks to his separate party policy and warns the students not to participate.

At the other end, Riyaan, Aman and computer science students along with couple of MBA students start the preparations like, collecting money, finalizing banners and flexes, booking DJ etc.

“Hey Aman! Alima has been calling you. Will you come out of the washroom?”

“Yes. Hold on.”

“Pass me the phone.”

Riyaan hands over the phone to Aman.

“Hi Alima. Sorry I’ve been busy from last couple of days. So how’s office and work?”

“Aman! I am sorry.”

“What for?”

“I am getting married. I’ve said ‘Yes’ to the guy. It’s your fault. I had informed you. You could never understand my feelings. I hate you Aman.”

Aman tries to speak but realizes that she may catch his emotion from his voice, so all he utters is “Ok”

“Ok? Good. I knew it. I really hate you”, she hangs up.

Riyaan hugs Aman and tries to sympathise with him.

“Yaar! I am alright. It’s ok. Dude! I am absolutely fine. Time to focus on next project. (Smiles) I’m so f\*cking relieved. I feel like a free bird. Pass me the weed. Time to celebrate.”

Starts smoking-up, turns on the laptop and starts writing a poem.

### **“Motivation is weed”**

More than an addiction, motivation is weed.

Helps me be a better person, teaches me to have no greed!

No, it is not a harmful drug, for the dopers, it is a creed.

More than an addiction, motivation is weed.

Success and failure travel at the same speed.  
To face them humbly, teaches me the weed.  
If utilized intelligently, it is creative indeed.  
More than an addiction, motivation is weed.

The old man said, real satisfaction comes from real deed.  
For you to satisfy yourself, honesty is the seed.  
My attitude and my wisdom are the gifts of this weed.  
It helps me be a better person, teaches me to have no greed!  
More than an addiction, motivation is weed!

Alima comes to meet him for the last time.

Hugs him tightly and says, "I don't want to leave you. Please don't let me go Aman"

Aman tries to act as normal as he can and pretends to be unaffected.

"I pray for your success and hope you will achieve all your goals. You're a good person. And I'm sure good things will happen with you."

Aman holds her hand and asks her to sit.

"Have a seat." He sits by her side holding her hands.

She continues, "I am concerned about you. No matter where I am, no matter how far we are, you'll always be in my prayers. Aman, promise me that you will find a nice girl and get married to her."

Aman keeps mum.

"You know what! You did keep your promise. You have actually given me the best days of my life. Your wife will be so lucky. And you know what! Actually I lied you saying black doesn't suit you. In fact, black suits you the most. And lastly, you know, the wristband that I took from you was not for remembrance! It makes u look attractive, I don't want you to look good when I am not with you. But stupid me! How stupid I am. It's not the black shirt or the wristband that makes you look good, your attitude and character do."

“You were right. I was attracted towards you from the very beginning. And you know what! I am NOT in love with you. We always knew the end of this story, right? So there is no question of falling in love. I am sure even you didn’t fall for me, did you?”

“No”, he replies.

“Wow. We’re so practical. I am so proud of myself. We defeated our feelings. Be the strong man that you are.” And she starts crying loudly.

Aman looks at her with a sombre expression trying his best not to show his feelings.

Kisses her on her forehead “You’re the most beautiful girl on this earth. (Kisses on chin), you’ve proven me wrong. You’ve proven that girls are not opportunists. (Kisses on nose) You’re the best girl for me and my family and I’d have loved to marry you. But you know what! I am such a loser! I’ve to let you go. (Kisses on lips). And yes! I used to watch you sleeping, I used to spend hours just watching you asleep, Oh God! And you know what! I was hurt every time you mentioned about your marriage. And yes, I knew the password of the computer is “student”. So filmy.”

She looks surprisingly, “Oh! Planned approach. Huh!”

“Yes, I approached you because I thought you’re a big challenge for me. I planned and impressed you. Every word I said to you, until you accepted my proposal, were self-scripted.”

Alima gives a strange look and asks “So you never cared for me? You were pretending all these days?”

“No. My gestures were real. My feelings are real. It’s just that I challenge myself to achieve something which is difficult. It encourages me to remain focused and gives me the confidence. Though you were just another challenge to me, the times I spent with you and feelings were real. ”

“Challenges! Plans! Focus. I don’t understand.”

“So, who’s the lucky guy? If he ever hurts you then please let me know. I’ll screw him up. And yes, I’ll always have the soft corner and respect for you.”

“Same here. He’s an NRI working in Japan.”

She holds his hands, “Promise me you will always be happy. Promise me Aman.”

**“A life lived happily is not a life lived fully.** But I can promise you no more girlfriends. I want to keep every moment spent with you as a souvenir. This is the way I’ll pay respect to the feelings that I’ve for you.”

Alima spends a couple of last hours with him.

Finally, before leaving she requests him to keep his promise.

“Aman, please don’t mind but lastly I want you to keep your promise of never getting in touch with me again. I hope you understand.” Requests Alima.

“Don’t worry Alima. I will never ever get in touch with you. That would be another punishment to me for losing you and I deserve it. I am ready. So when are you getting married?”

“Next month on 15<sup>th</sup>”

“What a day! It’s our farewell party. And guess what I am going to perform ‘Pray For me brother’ by A. R. Rahman. What a day. You’ve given this song a meaning. Thank you”

Riyaan and Aman walk to the Chairman’s cabin “Sir! Myself Aman, a final year student.”

“I know you. Yes, tell me how can I help you?”

He explains the whole scenario about the new director.

He explains how the new director is a threat to college’s reputation.

“Sir, I’ve collected some feedbacks from students. Please check it”

Aman passes few papers to the Chairman.

“It contains anonymous feedback of the students where they’ve disclosed Director’s character and reality.”

Riyaan passes a couple of pictures and hands it over to the chairman, “I’ve also got a couple of pictures from the pub where the new director is seen with female students. Please have a look.”

The chairman thanks them and assures a strict action will be taken against the new Director.

“Thank you so much Sir” .

They try to leave.

“Aman wait. I’d heard about you from the former Director few times. I remember once I’d called him to take your feedback since there were some complaints against you. He was impressed with you for setting new trends in college by organising events, competitions and polling. He thought you’re a mastermind. He seemed to like you a lot. And today, I must say, he was right.”

“Thank you so much again, Sir! I couldn’t have got a better compliment.”

“Sir, please do come to the farewell party. It’s on 15<sup>th</sup>. You will receive an invitation card shortly”

Riyaan congratulates Aman, “So you pass even this test of impressing the old Director.”

“So, are you convinced now?” asks Aman.

“Not really! You will have to continue it till the end. I’m impressed though.”

“I think, we can now roll the dice. I’m being impatient.”

“Well! I am not convinced yet. But if you wanna give it a try then why not?”

“There is nothing wrong in trying. We’ll get to know where exactly we stand.” Says Aman.

“Ok. Let’s do it.”

The next weekend, Aman and Riyaan join his classmates for a drink.

It’s the last get-together for them.

“Hey! The new director has been fired. Man. You’ve done it again. Congratulations!” congratulates the classmates.

“If a book was to be written on this college then it wouldn’t be complete without you. You’ve given us our right”, compliments another student.

Mr. Kumar, the senior most classmate, congratulates Aman and appreciates his inspiring achievement.

“You’d been my biggest challenge throughout the course”, whispers Mr. Kumar in Aman’s ear.

It’s a huge compliment for him as it comes from a highly respected mature man.

“Thank you Mr. Kumar! Compliment accepted.”

Finally, comes the day when computer science students organize the party.

Riyaan walks to Aman and asks “You have sent them the email, right? Did you get any response from them? It is recession all over and we’re about to finish our college.”

“Yes, I did email them but I’ve not received any response yet! Don’t worry, if not this, we have other plans too. Anyways, let’s chill man! Enjoy the party.” assures Aman.

“I received an email from a random guy who’s offered us a work but it looks suspicious. He claims to be an Entrepreneur but he’s sent me the email from a public domain.”

“I see. Will have a look once we’re back to room. So, are you all set to host the show?”

“Yes, I am. A bit nervous though.” replies Riyaan and takes the host seat.

Aman, besides being an organiser, gives his final performance for this college.

Riyaan has taken the seat of an Anchor.

“Ladies and Gentlemen! After that breath-taking performance it’s time for a song. Please put your hands together for Aman.”

Pray for me brother..... Pray for me sister.... ....

Lookin’ for the answers to all the questions in my life..... Are you searching for a reason to be kind?

Professors and students appreciate their creativity and congratulate the computer science students for such a well organised party.

“Henceforth, both MBA and computer science students will have equal rights and participations in all the activities.

The entertainment part like fashion show, cultural programs etc. will be handled by the Computer science students and formal part like prize distribution, speech etc. will be handled by the MBA students.”

**Warning:** *The next chapters, i.e. “The Corporate World” may sound unpleasant and vicious at times due to its harsh and caustic dialogues. Although the conversations are based on real conversations they’re not a verbatim.*

**A request:** *Please do not reveal the climax or motto of the book.*

## The Corporate World: 2010-2015

### Chapter 1:

Hyderabad:

After completing his Masters, Aman decides to join the company he always wanted to work for, his dream company.

He waits for a few months for the right opening at this company.

Recession effect, it takes nearly 8 months for Aman to receive a call from his dream company, The Dream India Pvt Ltd (Name changed), Hyderabad.

“Why should we hire you?”

“If you’re looking for an out-of-box thinker who can contribute to the entire organisation, then I am the right candidate.” Answers Aman confidently.

“What makes you think that you’re an out-of-box thinker?”

“I did get couple of offers from other companies but I wanted to start my career with this company and this is the company I wanted to contribute to because it has been my dream company for personal reasons.”

Aman gives personal and genuine reasons for calling it his dream company.

“Sir, I wish I could explain you the fact that me sitting in front of you and giving this interview is a result of my out-of-box thinking.”

After clearing the rounds of interviews, he gets selected.

Aman joins the corporate world with the same enthusiasm and zeal.

The Dream India Pvt Ltd, being his dream company, he’s high expectations.

Riyaan also follows him and joins the same company.



“Welcome to ‘The Dream Pvt Ltd’, Aman”, welcomes his manager, Mr. Sharma, a good looking man smartly dressed in formal.

Mr. Sharma has been in the corporate world for past 9 years.

He’s a popular manager. Neutral and unbiased.

Mr. Sharma introduces Aman with the team and the team leaders.

“He’s Venkat, your Team Leader.”

“Hi Aman. You can call me Venky”

“Hi Venky”.

Venkat has been working in this company for last 5 years.

He explains Aman roles and responsibilities and informs him that he’d be ready to take over the duties from the day after tomorrow.

Aman was promised that he’d go through a training for a month before taking over the responsibilities.

He enquires with a couple of his peer employees to confirm if they were given any training or not. He learns that everyone else has gone through some training.

“Venky! I am not yet ready to take over as I’m not yet trained on the project and the tools. I was told that there would be a training for a month.”

“Yes! We do train the employees but in your case, we don’t have a team. You were hired as a replacement for one of the employees and it was not a batch/mass hire. It’s not possible for us to provide training to a single employee. Don’t worry! You’ll learn it once you start working.”

Aman starts working, though not satisfied.

Aman completes his first month but he’s not yet started delivering to the project.

Mr. Sharma, the manager, is concerned about his performance.

“It’s been more than a month now and your performance has not improved! Aman, you will have to start performing.”

“Mr. Sharma, I am not performing because I am not satisfied with the way I see the corporate world working!”

“What do you mean? You’ve just entered this world. It’s too early for you to think how this world works. Focus on your work Aman”, warns Mr. Sharma.

On the other hand, Venky is also frustrated with him.

“Sir, I don’t think this guy is capable of handling it. We can search for an alternative. He doesn’t seem serious towards his job.” he suggests Mr. Sharma.

But Mr. Sharma is confident, “Looking at his academic background and his attitude, I think we should wait.”

Riyaan is not surprised. He was all prepared and set. However, he’s too unsatisfied.

There is a corrupt chain of management. The Hyderabad site is ruled by this chain.

The managers, including higher level managers, from different departments like Operation, Human Resource, and Case Management dept. and so on are a part of this chain.

Venky is a cunning employee who’s closer to the chain as he knows the fact that if you want to progress here, you got to be a part of the chain and follow them.

In corporate world you can survive in two ways:

By being a part of the chain which every company directly or indirectly has.

Or, by not being a part of it.

If you chose not to be a part of the chain, regardless of your performance, the promotions will be at the rate of a snail.

You can still survive. Who cares about promotions, right?

If that’s you then, yes. But we all do care about promotions.

Now logically, why would they prefer to promote someone who can go against them in future?

Why not promote someone who’s a part of the chain?

Promotions and appreciations are, ultimately, management’s decision.

Are managements fair enough?

Three months pass and Aman's performance and now his attitude is a concern.

Venky starts building grudges against him for his straight forward attitude, poor performance and unfriendly nature.

He starts brain washing the higher management and the chain about Aman's behaviour and attitude.

It's high time the management took final decision about him.

Mr. Sharma calls him for a meeting "Have a look at your data. It's been three months now and we do not see any improvement in you. You're almost at the bottom in ranking! I had high expectations from you. You've let me down."

"I'm sorry Sir. Firstly, I was not trained. Secondly, I notice a lot of partiality and politics going on. I'm distracted. But, thank you for showing faith in me. I won't let you down. I promise."

"I don't want to say but this is the last warning for you. We'll have to take some action if you don't show any improvement in 15 days." Warns Mr. Sharma.

Aman knows it's time to pull up the socks!

Riyaan helps him prepare.

He starts learning, and within 15 days starts performing dramatically well.

He surprises one and all with his performance and consistency.

Venky is not ready to accept the fact that Aman has actually started performing.

He is not happy and starts targeting Aman for every small mistakes.

He starts escalating even small issues to the Manager, giving negative feedback and trying to prove him good for nothing. He tries his best to defame Aman.

However, Mr. Sharma is aware of corporate politics and knows Venky's intention.

It's a common scenario where an employee is friendly with you, always smiles and seems perfect but doesn't miss a chance to drag you down when you're not around by complaining about you or by disclosing your unprofessional behaviours to your manager.

“Aman has some attitude problem. He doesn’t mingle with people. He behaves as if he’s the king.”

Downloading songs or movies or accessing external sites are basic company guideline violation but it’s common for the employees to access external sites or download songs or movies.

“If you want new songs then contact Aman, he’s downloaded it in his office laptop.” An employee informs another employee in a louder tone making sure Mr. Sharma listens to it.

Aman is sensitive and it’s disheartening to see such people. Nevertheless, these people from corporate world have made his opinion about people even stronger.

“The more I interact with people, the more confidently I say I am the best.”, “The better I get to know them the farer I want to go from them. Wish they had some self-respect. All they want is a fake reputation in society. The reputation gained by selling self-respect!”

And the hatred towards society continues.

Even though he’s just entered the corporate world, he knows that this is not the place he would want to see himself at.

Aman is not friendly with the employees as he’s selective and he thinks that most of them are self-centred, opportunists and losers who believe in putting others down or back stabbing.

He finds majority of the employees are insecure and they play dirty politics and call it diplomacy.

From other’s point of view, most of them are diplomatic and friendly.

They are professionals. They know how to behave. They know how to act.

Wearing a smile always helps, doesn’t matter whether it’s coming naturally to you or you have to fake it. Being diplomatic is considered a good quality.

“Yes you’re right but....”

“You have done a good job but we have decided to go with someone better.”

Diplomacy, for Riyaan and Aman, is like slapping someone on his face and making it seem as if you have patted on his cheek!

For them, diplomacy is more like backstabbing a person while making him think you just hugged him.

Aman can't pretend to smile. He is not diplomatic.

For him you cannot be both diplomatic and true to yourself.

You can either wear a fake smile or you can be yourself and smile only when it naturally comes from inside.

“Either you're right or you're wrong! There is no but!”

“Either you are a winner or you're a loser! There is no third option!”

Aman's disliked by most of the employees and they don't miss a single opportunity to defame him.

The only friend he has is Riyaan.

**The Corporate world. Where professionals work.**

**Interestingly, you will hardly find any employee professional enough!**

“Politics! Partiality! Racial-bias! North-south, east-west feeling. Back-biting and backstabbing. It's horrible.” Complains Riyaan.

“If you're a straight forward person, intelligent and focused then you're screwed up in corporate world! You cannot be straight forward and progressive at the same time. No, it doesn't work even in the corporate world. Being straight forward is often considered arrogant or indiscipline.” Adds Aman.

“You have to be diplomatic and politically correct. In short, you got to be dishonest with yourself.”

Appreciations and rewards have nothing to do with your real performance!

Strange but true.

Yes, the data can be altered, right?

The better the rapport with your manager, the higher the chance of you being rewarded.

But wait! Is everyone working in the corporate world the same?

Definitely, not.

There are few genuine professionals who've earned the position with their hard work and dedications. However, the list is too short. You can easily count them on your fingers.

“Welcome to the corporate world. Thank God, we don't have to work hard to look for opportunities.” Says Riyaan.

“Ha! Ha! Right. I can see a lot of opportunities for us. Question is, which one to start from?”

Meanwhile, Mr. Sharma too has some issues going on with the Management.

Mr. Sharma doesn't believe in following his senior's footsteps and he's not a part of the corrupt chain.

Aman, at the same time, despite being a top performer now, is a concern for Mr. Sharma as every alternate day he gets a complaint.

“Sir! Someone told me that he was seen at a theatre last Tue. Remember? He'd informed us that he's got some personal work and can't make it to the office.”

“I saw him smoking up weed outside the office.” Informs another employee.

“Aman was seen accessing an external website which is the violation of basic company guidelines, BCG.” Complains an employee.

“Did you notice him? He doesn't follow dress code. He's mostly seen in jeans.”

“Sir! Apparently, he carries weed all the time in his bag. He's addicted to it.” Another spills the beans.

Mr. Sharma is not a gullible manager but he does need to follow the terms and conditions of an organisation.

He's no option but to call Aman for a meeting yet again, “Why is everyone complaining about you? Everyone can't be wrong. You have to work on it.”

“Sir. I am being targeted. Everyone complains about me because everyone is the same. I’m being dragged into this corporate politics.”

“Why would they target you? Why not Mr A or Mr B?” asks Mr Sharma

“Because Mr A and Mr B are all the same. I am different. I don’t play politics. I don’t entertain them. I don’t accompany them for a cigarette or a movie. There are multiple reasons for them to target me. They don’t like me because they know I avoid them. It’s natural for them to target me.”

“Why don’t you mingle with your peers? Why do you avoid them?” Mr. Sharma asks.

“Sir! I am not here to make friends.”

Mr. Sharma gives a strange look. “Listen Aman! We’re a team. You will have to mingle with them. I know you’re being targeted. If you don’t mingle with them then they’ll target you. You’re a good performer but only performance is not sufficient in corporate world. How you tackle people around you, how diplomatic you are, your behaviour and rapport with the teammates and everyone around you is equally important.”

“I am sorry but I can’t pretend. I cannot smile at someone just for the sake of it. If it doesn’t come naturally then I can’t fake it. This is my problem. If I don’t like someone, I can’t pretend to like. If they don’t like me for it then it’s their choice. But yes, I don’t want them to play politics with me because I am not into all these. If I don’t play politics with them then I expect the same from them.”

“I understand. Good luck! By the way, I have forwarded your idea of having a cubical cabin for our team to the higher level management. They appreciated it and told me that shortly we’ll implement it.”

“Thank you Mr. Sharma. Having a separate cabin for this team will make them feel more important. Besides, it will be secured since the project we work on requires high confidentiality.”

“Right. It’s a good idea and I am sure we’ll get it done by the end of this month.”

It’s been 15 months now and Aman has already bagged few awards for his consistent performance.

He’s also shared few ideas with Mr. Sharma, to improve the productivity of the team and make the team look more organised, which have been implemented.

Mr. Sharma is serving his notice period.

Apparently, he's been asked to resign.

Rewards and recognitions for the top performers of the year.

This is one of the most prestigious awards given to an employee at The Dream Pvt Ltd where managers nominate 2 to 4 best performers from each project/team.

It is considered a big achievement not only for the employees who bag it but also for the entire team that the employees belong to.

The best ones from these selected performers are qualified based on their consistency and other parameters.

Out of the qualified ones, they select the best ones for the award.

Mr. Sharma nominates Aman and Venky along with couple of other employees from his team.

Aman bags the award.

This is the first time an employee from this project has bagged this prestigious award.



Venky, who's never liked Aman, is not able to bare him and his success.

It really takes a big man to admit 'I was so wrong' and Venky is definitely not big enough.



It's a team party.

Mr. Sharma and Aman are drinking separately while few are busy dancing, some are busy chatting.

Venky has joined a group of other managers.

Though they seem to be drinking and enjoying themselves but they do have an eye on Mr. Sharma and Aman.

Probably, they're curious about the topic they'd be discussing.

"You know I've been in this environment for over 10 yrs. now. I was very much like you when I entered corporate world. Even I had the same zeal. Same attitude. No politics. I was different.

Gradually, I realised that the dark truth not only about this corporate world but about this world is that over 95% are losers! They're the same. You will hardly find people with the winner's attitude. They do start as a winner. But eventually they give-up due to their personal reasons or responsibilities." Enlightens Mr. Sharma.

Mr. Sharma gets emotional and adds, "I am one of the losers who started on a high note! Even I took the stands, I fought for the rights and even now I do. But gradually I realised that the society doesn't care how you have earned a position, all they admire is "The Position". If you want to earn a position, you will have to go with the flow. It's your choice whether you want to be your hero or society's hero. Society respects position. And, over 95% prefer to impress the society.

I am married, I've got my own responsibilities. My wife wants to compete. My children want gadgets. I am obsessed with cars. And do you think it's possible for me to afford all these if I decide to rebel?

Aman, it's very hard to fight against the management. It's like fighting against a corrupt system. We alone cannot change it.

At some point we'll be compelled to give up the fight. It could be due to family responsibilities or personal greed. But we do quit." laments Mr. Sharma.

"Mr. Sharma with due respect! **We can only be a real hero for the society if we're a hero for our own selves.** The respect that we gain from society by earning a fake status is the respect that they have for our status. Not for us, the person. We lose the respect, the moment we lose our position or status.

But, if we can keep being our own hero then, ultimately, we will end up being a hero for the society. And the respect gained here will not be a temporary one.

It's all about which path we chose. The easier one or the difficult one. **It's easier to impress others than to impress your own self."**

“Sometimes I feel you’re overqualified for your position. I hope you continue with the same attitude. World needs people like you.” Compliments Mr Sharma.

“Thank you! Mr. Sharma, I don’t understand if you’re one among the 95% then why are you quitting this job! Is it true that you were asked to resign?”

“Not everyone from 95% can be a part of some chain, right?”

He adds, “I’ve accepted the reality but that doesn’t mean I must to be a part of it. I have changed myself into a diplomatic person. But I still keep a distance from such employees who play politics, partiality and backstabbing. However, there is a way of distancing yourself from all these without harming yourself. We call it diplomacy.” answers Mr. Sharma.

That was Aman’s last drink with Mr. Sharma as he’s left the company now.

Venky has been promoted as a new manager now, a replacement for Mr. Sharma.

While Majid, an old employee of this organisation, is a new team leader now.

Majid had consistently been performing for years.

And, finally, he gets the position he deserved long back.

He doesn’t belong to the community that Venky belongs to and hence doesn’t share a good rapport with him as he knows that Venky is biased towards caste and religion.

Based on Aman’s consistency, his name had been sent for yet another award by Mr Sharma before he quit the job.

For the time being he’s been presented a gift by a third level manager in front of the team.

He’s been told that the certificate and award will be presented officially at awards distribution function which is lined up for the next month.

A fully decorated function hall filled by the employees.

Musical treat for the employees.

The host announces the winners.

Not again!

Thanks to Venky!

The award that Aman was supposed to get officially has been given to another employee who is way underperformer comparing to him.

(Evidence attached in the next chapter)

He looks at the higher level manager who'd given him the same award on floor.

The manager avoids eye-contact with him.

The incident from his schooldays flashes by his mind.

He wants to go to the stage, snatch the mic and announce the real winner.

“Enough is enough!”

Riyaan controls him, “Listen Aman! Calm down. It's not a wise decision to create a scene.”

He takes Aman out to the canteen.

“This is what you wanted, right? You're exactly at the situation you wanted to be at.”

“Patience! It's the whole system that we'd be fighting against. And provoking them at this moment will only harm us.”

“This is a perfect situation for us. Let's utilize it. We're on the right track.”

Riyaan starts explaining him the next steps.

## Chapter 2:

“Venky! The data looks incorrect. You seem to have scored me incorrectly in one of the parameters. If you correct it, I am ranked one. But as per the data that you have published, my position is 4<sup>th</sup>!” complains Aman.

“Let me check it. It could be due to human error.”

Venky corrects the data (doesn't re-publish it) and apologizes to him.

This is not the first time Aman has noticed something fishy!

It's been nearly two years for Riyaan and Aman in this company.

Everything would be normal for a month or two and then Venky would start altering Aman's data again as he doesn't want him to perform.

It's a corporate world where employees need to follow a hierarchy of management for escalations.

Keeping the same hierarchy in mind, Aman approaches Venky's Manager to escalate the concern.

"But why do you think would Venky do it intentionally? You cannot point finger on someone without proper evidence. I'll check the data and get back to you."

The manager, after a couple of days, informs that it was a human-error!

The managers try to discourage Aman by indirectly making him aware of the consequences. Venky, on the other end, continues defaming and demotivating Aman.

"Venky! What's your problem? Do you have some personal grudge with me? If yes, let's keep it personal. Let's not bring the grudge into profession. We can sort it out outside the office."

"What are you talking about? I seriously don't understand." Venky tries to pretend as if he has no idea what Aman is referring to.

"You know what I am talking about. Listen Venky, I do not play any politics and I expect the same from others. Do not involve me in all these bullshits. I am least interested in this corporate politics. But if you like to play it then let's play it like a man."

The insidious plot he's created for Aman is something that could not only terminate Aman but also blacklist him in the main database.

As a result, no company would hire him.

Now that Aman has already complained about his data being altered, Venky has a different temporary plan.

He starts altering other employees' performance report.

Means, if Aman has scored 80%, Venky would modify his competitor's data to make them score 85% and top the rank. He would increase other employees score to push Aman down the rankings.

(Evidence attached in the next chapter)

“Venky! I’ve noticed you have sent wrong data again.”

“I will check and resend it” Replies Venky uninterestedly.

“Venky! I am warning you. I am the wrong mind you’re messing up with. I will screw up the whole system if you continue messing up with me.” Declares Aman in front of whole team while Riyaan smiles mysteriously.

Venky accepts the challenge, “Let’s see who screws up whom?”

Aman, at times, starts worrying but Riyaan looks completely satisfied and hopeful.

“We need more evidence. Written facts. Let’s send an email to the higher level. Their response will decide our next step.” Suggests Riyaan.

Aman complains it to the higher level manager but they are not convinced with his points. They do not see any logic behind Venky targeting him and considers it a tool error.

“There were few errors in the tool. We have corrected it. I am sure you won’t have any concern on this here onwards.”

“Sir. Thank you for not disappointing me! I was expecting exactly the same response from you.” Says Aman in a sarcastic tone.

“You need to work on your attitude. You cannot survive here with this wrong attitude.”

“Sir, if being straight forward is wrong, if taking a stand is wrong and if proving a manager wrong when he is wrong, is wrong then I am sorry but I do not want to be right.” Disgruntles Aman.

After yet another contentious debate, he leaves the meeting room.

“Great! Congratulations! What’s next?” asks Riyaan.

“Let me take a chance with my TL, Majid. If he agreed to support us then it would be great.”

He speaks to his TL, Majid, and asks him to help him get some information from the management assuring him that his name will never come into the picture.

Basic Company Guidelines (BCG).

Every company follows its guidelines.

However, none of the companies really follows its guidelines!

It's as contradicting as it sounds.

BCG may include small behavioural things like accessing external web sites, coming late to office on regular basis, sharing credentials, installing unwanted software or storing unwanted files in laptops and so on, to some serious issues like harassment, verbal or physical fights, drunk-on-duty, drugs etc.

Employees accessing external websites like social networking or sports sites are pretty common despite being restricted.

Similarly, storing movies or unwanted files is another common BCG violation. But these violations are ignored.

Yes these mistakes are ignored if you're not Aman or if you've a good rapport with your seniors.

I mean, come on! You cannot decide to stand against the management and expect them to ignore your mistakes. Right?

Venky's vicious act to get Aman terminated continues.

"Aman! The compliance team wants to test your laptop. They've randomly selected few names for compliance test."

Aman seems to be in trouble now as he does have couple of unwanted files stored and he does access external sites, like everyone else in the company does.

The team has tested his laptop and made a note of the compliance and his employee ID.

His laptop has been taken under custody for further tests.

"Dude! I heard you have got a good collection of movies. I have got the pendrive with me. Can you copy couple of movies into it?" Riyaan copies few movies from his colleagues' laptop.

"Is Facebook working on your laptop? It seems the admin has disabled it on my laptop!" complains Riyaan to a colleague.

“It’s working for me. I can access it.” Confirms the colleague.

He takes a screenshot and convinces the colleague to email him the screenshot.

Similarly, both collect multiple screenshots and pictures from random employees either by convincing them or by deceiving them.

Riyaan forwards the evidence to Venky and warns him of the consequences if they decide to take any action against Aman.

“You see, it’s common. So before you decide to take any action against us on compliance, do consider these employees. I believe few of them are your favourites.”

The battle is no more a secret for other employees.

Most of the employees from his team and the management are aware of it.

As a result, they prefer to keep a distance with Riyaan and Aman as it may spoil their image in front of the managers.

In contrast, there are couple of employees who appreciate and encourage them for their stand.

“You’ve been taking this stand since a long time now. Don’t you think you’re wasting your time? Instead, switch the company. You know you are not going to get anything out of it.”

“We know you’re doing a right thing but practically it’s ‘crazy’ to go against the managers.”  
Voices out another employee his opinion.

“Thanks for your concern but this is what makes me what I am. It’s not easy being me. At every stage you need to sacrifice, face criticisms, tolerate and be patient. If I give up then what’s the difference between me and you?” explains Aman.

“Don’t behave like a lunatic! Keep your ego aside. Forget about rights and wrongs or else your career will be over.” Another employee shows his concern.

“What’s the use of such career where I get no respect? Is money everything? I know it sounds too good to be true or rather crazy to be talking about self-respect, honesty, fight for your right and blah blah because these days such things have no values.

Money talks! Money gives you respect. True! But that’s not the respect you gain from self! Money can give me respect in society but it’s my so called craziness that gives me self-

respect and believe me the satisfaction and the respect I get from self is way more than getting my salary.”

For employees, Aman’s principles and thoughts are mere jokes.

They think he is a nut.

Aman is not extra ordinary in anything, not even excellent.

He doesn’t have a single quality or skill which can be considered noticeably good.

And a couple of managers, in past, did remind him the same.

“What do you think of yourself? What is this attitude for?”

To which, he’d replied arrogantly; “This attitude is for being myself.”

After spending 30 months in this organisation Aman is now eligible for a tech team lead profile.

He’s prepared for the Internal Job Postings (IJP).

He attends a couple of interviews but doesn’t get selected despite performing well.

“May I come in Sir?”

“Yes Aman. Please come in.”

“So, you’ve applied for a Team Lead role! Good. Who do you consider a good team leader? Could you explain me the roles and responsibilities of a team leader?” Asks the interview panel.

Aman explains both technical and non-technical roles and responsibilities of a team lead.

They ask him some technical questions and he answers them.

“Are you sure that’s the answer?”

“Yes Sir.”

Manager smiles and says, “Let me ask you another question....”

Asks another question and tries to prove Aman wrong.

“You’re wrong again.”



“Sir. Please have a look at the answers, I am sure I am right again.”

“You mean to say I don’t know the answers!”

“No Sir. I mean to say it’s natural for a human being to make error.

You seem to have forgotten the correct answers. Please verify it once.” Argues Aman.

The so called diplomatic managers smile and ask him another question.

He answers the questions but again the managers are not ready to buy it.

They reject him.

Now, my point is, why is it acceptable to be diplomatic and biased but not acceptable to be straight forward and neutral?!

Why is it acceptable to diplomatically screw up someone’s career but not acceptable to be true and transparent enough to tell an employee on his face that “No. We don’t want you here.”?!

As planned, it’s time for Riyaan to try his luck.

Majid, the TL, helps him prepare for the interview.

He enters the interview room.

Similar questions, similar answers.

“You need to work a little more on your technical aspects.”

“Sir, the answers that I gave you were consulted and given by the seniors who were able to clear their interviews with these answers.”

“Time changes. Those were different days. Less competitions. Now we’ve candidates brighter than you.”

Riyaan gets offended, he’s louder, “Sir, you seem to have decided not to promote me. But then it’s a corporate world and you cannot be straight forward and tell me that ‘NO we cannot promote you because you’re against us’.

Sir I understand you have to be politically correct. But I don’t. You can pass whatever feedback you want to pass to the higher level managers. Take whatever action you want to take. I pity you people.” Yells Riyaan and leaves the room.

(Evidence attached in the next chapter)

“Wake up! It’s time to taste the coffee.” Says Riyaan.

“Great! I’m all set. We already have enough of artefacts.” Assures Aman.

The following day Aman writes an email to the Managing Director of the company, Sunitha Vaidyan and HR leader, Chandresan.

TO: Chandresan (Head of HR dept)

BCC: Sunitha Vaidyan

Subject: **“Dream! Please help me!”**

Note: Mrs Vaidyan can see that the email has been sent to the HR leader, however, the HR cannot see Mrs Vaidyan as she’s been added in BCC

To: Third Line Manager

BCC: Vice Presidents (People and Operation Dept.) and Sunitha Vaidyan.

Aman and Riyaan, who’d planned it for months, had been collecting the screenshots, monthly reports, and wrongly published data secretly.

He attaches all the evidence that they’ve collected against the managers which prove data forgery, partiality and favouritism.

This, if proven, can get Venky into a big trouble since data forgery is considered a sensitive crime.

The reason he prefers to keep VPs and Managing Director (MD) in BCC is that he knows ultimately the issue will get escalated to the highest level.

Even if the managers try to influence or pass wrong information to the higher level managers, they won’t be able to influence these people.

Rather, the managers will be proven wrong if they decide to pass wrong information to the VPs or MD because they would already be aware of the facts.

The three page long harshly written email along with the attachments start circulating among the higher level managers.

It's literally a hurricane that can wreak the whole system.

(Parts of original email attached in the next chapter)

Let's see how difficult it is for him to prove the partiality, data forgery and corruption despite having all the evidences and artefacts!

### **Chapter 3:**

Within a couple of days Aman notices drastic change in Venky.

He starts trying to be friendly and genuinely concerned about Aman.

Though Venky pretends as if he's realized that he was wrong, Aman knows what these changes are for!

Please find the screenshots of the original email sent to the MD and the VPs.

Please read the entire email to understand the situation, language and intention more clearly.

I would request you to read this email carefully as it actually explains Aman and his straight forward nature.





I have attached the screen shots of altered datas and emails that I'd sent to my Managers in past appealing help.

My contribution to the account has been remarkable, if recognized. My contribution has been making a difference to the account. I've been working for more than 2 years and maintained the account so far but couple of weeks. I also helped in various processes in many ways which can not be explained in email. It was me who forwarded the idea to have dedicated agents for the account. It was me who suggested to have separate agents for the account as earlier the same agents used to handle all the accounts. I then put forward an idea to have separate agents for the account and to make the account look more organised; and many more to help the process as I was an acting leader who also used to prepare data and conduct meetings with agents, beside training them. Beside these, it was me to form a cricket team in our account, I always encourage agents to participate in various events, I am actively involved in extra curriculum activities too.

If such politics/partiality/data alteration are being done by the Supervisors/QAs/Managers then is it my

If such politics/partiality/data alteration are being done by the Supervisors/QAs/Managers then is it my attitude that needs to be changed or its high time that someone like me stands up and brings the issue into picture? If the managers are proven wrong then who is responsible for my loss? The Manager or the Supervisor ? I do not want to serve the notice period of three months and waste another three months ; I do not want to quit at the first place or give up after spending 39 mnths at the same position which I did not deserve. But what is the guarantee that I'll not be wasting another couple of years too fighting for my right? Keeping fingers crossed. I've not yet lost my faith on

This scenario is common but the issues are never brought into picture for many reasons. There are dozens of ME in every account; most of us give up or end up being like them. Career is important to all; we belong to families where each one of us have own responsibilities and moreover, it is foolishness to stand up against management when you know that you got to stand all alone. A  wouldn't dare to take such steps. Rather change the company or accept the reality and adjust as my peer employees suggest me. Sounds selfish to me. I genuinely believe you/  need me more than I need you. Though my absence may not make any difference to you but my presence will do.

says "Don't just work, work smart"; "Be enterprising." The boss as "Mr. Fix-it" slides through the debate, which signifies the end. A true "Mr. Fix-it" is one who is capable of doing quality work smartly in less time; someone who has the ability to take the decisions in favour of "Mr. Fix-it" even if the Management doesn't support it ("there is no wrong time to do the right thing")! Someone who is creative and has the ability to think out of box. Someone who doesn't work for self responsibilities only but also with an intention to help the Organisation and many more. And when someone with these qualities enters "Mr. Fix-it", this is the way he is treated. I've always claimed to be a true "Mr. Fix-it". People do laugh at me when I give them the reasons and connections between "Mr. Fix-it" and I. My manager (Mr. Fix-it) laughed at me when I once mentioned that I am here to make a difference. couple of times he also passed the sarcasm on floor saying "So, you think you can make a difference to heheh"; I would reply saying, "I will."

Today, I am not ready to believe that they have won and I am a loser. If this is the truth then I'll lose the respect I have for \_\_\_\_\_ and corporate world.

Apologies!

“Well done! Now get ready to face the top level managers. Make sure you don’t give up.” Advices Riyaan.

“You know I am not gonna give up. Let’s see what they come up with.”

The 4th line manager meets Aman and asks him to explain the concerns.

“Sir, the managers are biased here. Besides, I am being targeted by my manager. My data are being altered.”

“Aman. Do you know the email that you’ve sent to me is very harsh? The accusations you’ve made in email are very sensitive.”

“A truth if not presented the way it is then it’s not 100% truth. And a truth is a truth only when it’s 100% true.”

“I see. But there are other ways of revealing the truth. A politer way, a diplomatic way. You could have met me before sending the email.”

“Sir! I am following the hierarchy. I did meet my 2<sup>nd</sup> line manager and had even marked my 3<sup>rd</sup> line in an email stating my condition. But I did not hear anything convincing from them.”

“I believe the second line manager had taken care of your concern. I had told him to handle it.”

“He did. But I am not satisfied with his response. He calls it a human error and believes that my manager doesn’t have any grudge against me.”

“Yes. That’s the fact. Why would your manager keep a grudge against you?”

“Sir the emails that I’ve sent you has all the evidence that prove my points. I am not claiming it without proper evidence.”

“I went through the email and attachments but these could be due to some technical error or tool issue.”

“Sir if you notice my scores have been altered repeatedly. It can’t be an error. We cannot repeat the same mistake again and again. Moreover, why does he err only with my data? Why does he mistakenly increase the marks of my competitors every time?!”

“Did you discuss it with your manager when you noticed it before sending the emails to us?”

“I did inform him couple of times. But I realised that instead of complaining it to him, I should start keeping mum and start collecting evidences, because ultimately it’s ignored saying it’s a human or tool error. And now, I do have enough of screenshots and emails that prove my points. There are multiple parameters that he’s been played with. And interestingly, I’ve been at the losing end every time. Do you think it’s just a co-incidence? It cannot be a technical or tool error because only my data is being affected in all the cases. If you notice when I complained him about my data being altered, he started increasing other’s score/mark. He thought I wouldn’t bother to check my peer employees’ data. It proves that he didn’t want

me to top the rank. Besides, I've also forwarded you the screenshots of employees accessing external sites and storing unwanted data in their laptops but I was warned for the same. These points prove that I am being targeted by my manager."

"Let me go through it, discuss with the managers and I'll get in touch with you. From next time, if you have any complaints, you can approach me before sending emails."

(Evidence attached)

Aman receives a call from Mrs Bandana, a lawyer from organisation's Case management team.

"Hi Aman! I've been assigned this case and I'm your attorney. Could you please explain me everything in detail.

He explains her everything from the beginning.

"Please forward me all the evidences and concerns to my email address." Requests Mrs. Bandana.

"Hey Riyaan! I'm not sure where did this case management Dept. come into picture from?"

"That's not important. It could be assigned by one of the top level managers you'd sent emails to or it could be just another trick to convince you."

"Could be. In either case, it's gonna benefit us."

Even though the evidences submitted by Aman clearly prove his points, the management is not ready to buy it.

Aman and Riyaan don't give up and continue collecting more evidences.

"Dude! Why don't you complain to the higher level Manager when you know that you're more deserving candidate for promotion than the one who actually got promoted?" asks Riyaan his peer employee.

"You know bro, performance itself doesn't guarantee you a promotion here. Good rapport with your manager is equally important. The one who got promoted is one of Venky's favourites." Replies the employee.

"But this is when we should take stand, right? Nepotism cannot be tolerated in corporate world."

"Not only in corporate world, Nepotism is common everywhere. As long as taking stand matters, I've many responsibilities and I cannot take any risk at this point of my career." answers the employee.

Aman calls up Majid, his TL.

“Hi Bro. Hope everything in management is under control.”

“Man. You have screwed up the whole management. It’s a much tensed situation. Hats off bro. I am with you.”

“Thanks Brother. By the way, have they accepted their defeat?”

“They never will. Accepting their defeat means accepting the fact that the whole chain/system is corrupt. They will try to threaten you or prove you wrong.”

“I am ready for all these. It’s understood, they won’t accept it. Data forgery is a big crime and the evidence that I’ve sent to them clearly proves my point. I can actually drag them to the court.” Warns Riyaan expecting the TL would convey the warning to the managers.

“You’re right. It’s a sensitive issue. In fact, multiple times, they’ve sent wrong data to the client as well.” Informs the TL.

“Are you serious? Do you have any evidence?” asks Riyaan.

“Yes, I’ve the reports. Even I got to know lately. It’s only after your case that we started monitoring data carefully. When I started looking at old data, I noticed that wrong data have been sent to client to keep the score in green.”

“Could it be due to some error?”

“Possible. But that cannot be an excuse. You cannot be so careless that you repeatedly send wrong data to the client and, interestingly, only when your original score is in red!”

“What a hoax. If it has been done repeatedly then it’s pretty clear that it has been done to make the data look green. Thanks Brother for standing by me.”

Riyaan gives a high-five and congratulates Aman.

Every day Aman receives emails from different department and have to attend conference meeting or face to face meetings with the top level management.

In the process, he has a telephonic conference with the HR department (Mr. Rao), Operation Department (3<sup>rd</sup> line manager) and the Case Management department (Manager and Aman’s lawyer Mrs. Bandana).

Even Venky has been invited.

Aman is asked to explain once again.



Aman explains his part of story.

The Senior HR manager, Mr. Rao, interrupts.

“These could be the result of your negative thinking.”

“Sir. Even I thought the same initially until I noticed his unnatural behaviour towards me. I noticed that he would try to humiliate me for every small errors. He would project me as good for nothing by highlighting my mistakes and ignoring my qualities. Sir, we’re human being and this kind of nature is not something new for us.”

Then Aman tries to explain couple of incidents.

“The first time I noticed that my data was being altered, I informed Venky. He stopped it for a couple of months and then started the same again. I then approached his manager. Venky knew that I am keeping an eye on my data so he started modifying my competitors’ data.”

The 3<sup>rd</sup> line manager from Operation dept. interrupts by assuring that yes he’s taken care of the issue.

The HR manager diverts the topic by asking Venky his rapport with other team members to prove that it is Aman who’s the problem and not Venky.

Venky replies confidently that he’s very good rapport with his team members and how he’s a popular manager.

While Aman’s lawyer and the case management dept. prefer not to talk much.

Mr. Rao tries to convince that he’ll take care of the issue and calls Aman for a one-on-one meeting at his cabin.

“What do you want? Shall we change your manager? Or you want a new team? If you’re not able to adjust here then we can waive your notice period.”

(Evidence attached)

“You want me to quit the job? What for? If I’d to quit it, I could have done that years ago. I wouldn’t have stayed back for nearly 4 years and screwed my own career for no reasons. I want this organization to accept that the whole system is corrupt. I want to change the system. Can you do that?” asks Aman.

“You’re over playing your role. Are you aware that you’re ruining your own career?” warns Mr. Rao.

“Mr. Rao, welcome to the battle. I’d seen you with operation department’s managers’ couple of times in smoking zone. I am pretty much aware of the fact that the HR department and operation department share warm relationship. I am not surprised at all.”

“You’re trying to say I am influenced?”

“You are.”

“I see. Anyways, you’re wasting your time. We can help you move to a different team if you want to stay back with this organisation. If not, we can assure you a clean exit.”

Aman shakes hands with Mr. Rao and leaves the room.

Mr. Rao knows that he’s a hard nut to crack.

Aman writes an email to Mr. Rao thanking him for the offer and keeps Mrs Vaidyan, the MD, in loop (hidden from Mr. Rao)

He is now called by the Operation’s department Vice president for a one on one meeting.

“What exactly do you want?” asks the VP.

“So you agree that whatever I’ve mentioned in the email is correct?”

“Is that what you want? If so then No. Your points do not make sense.”

“Sir. If my points didn’t make a sense then you wouldn’t be entertaining me and asking me what I want! I want this organization to accept the reality.”

Aman starts getting a call from his Dad. His phone is on vibration mode, he ignores it.

“What reality are you talking about?”

“In corporate world, there is no space for people like us. It’s hard for an honest and straight forward person to succeed here. This world welcomes corrupt and boot-lickers full heartedly while genuine performers lag behind if they fail to build rapport with the managers.”

Aman’s voice raises up as he gets emotional, “I want this organisation to accept that out-of-box thinkers are forced to think within the box because they’re not given enough space, opportunities and encouragements. This world must accept the reality that if an employee is more intelligent than his manager then he’s rather considered arrogant or over-smart. You cannot be more intelligent or more qualified than your manager or 3<sup>rd</sup> line manager! If you are then you got to pretend that you are not.”

The VP tells Aman that he needs to keep calm and be more professional.

(Evidence attached)

Aman's mobile starts vibrating again. He has missed few calls by now from his Dad.

The VP tells him to attend the call as it might be urgent and assures him that he is personally going through all the data.

Aman calls back his father and comes to know about his grandmother.

“She is in ICU and unconscious!”

Aman, as per the rule, sends an email to his manager asking for a leave.

After a few hours Venky sends an email to Aman informing him that considering the work load it's not possible to grant him a long leave.

Aman forwards the same email to the MD and leaves the office screaming at Venky

“I never asked you for a leave, I only informed you that I am leaving.”

Within 10 minutes Aman receives a call from a top level manager stating that his leaves have been granted and also offers him support.

Even Venky calls Aman to apologise and asks him if he needs any help.

The next day he gets to know the devastating news that she's passed away.

The days spent with grandmother flashes by Aman's mind.

He's shattered.

Capital City of a neighbouring country:

Co-incidence! Even Pranav is in town.

He comes to meet Aman.

After paying condolence he hugs Aman and asks for forgiveness.

Aman looks at Riyaan.

“It takes a real man to forgive!” whispers Riyaan in Aman’s ear.

Aman hugs him back and whispers, “Pranav! You know, gradually I realised that it was neither your fault nor Akansha’s fault. Both of you were being practical, it was me who was unaware of the reality. I’ve forgiven you long ago.”

“Thanks man!”

Pranav, Riyaan and Aman try and spend as much time together as they can.

They discuss about Akansha and laugh out at their past.

Pranav informs him that they broke up within a year and Akansha is now already married to a rich guy.

“But man! You betrayed me. You a\*\*hole. I didn’t expect this from you.” Complains Aman.

“Even I didn’t expect you to keep the grudge for years! I hate you man.” Replies Pranav.

Aman becomes serious and says, “But man! She is the one who turned me into a playboy!”

“Playboy? How?!”

“I mean, she made me realise that I am a boy who any girl can play with.” And starts laughing at his own PJ.

“Your sense of humour has not improved a bit. Same PJs”

“Oh I see. Look who’s talking?”

Thank God! Now that Pranav and Aman are back to the normal terms, Aman has got something to smile for.

### Back to Chennai:

The first thing he does is to write a ‘Thank you’ email to Mrs. Vaidyan.

To which she replies back with her condolence message.

From: Nara anan/In

02:33 PM

To: Mishra/India/

cc

Subject: Re: Leave request (Thank you )

Dear ,

My sympathies to you and your family for your loss.

nith

Sent from my iPhone

The battle resumes.

The higher level managers from different departments try to convince Aman by either saying that those were mistakes or by offering him a new team or a new role.

But he has something else in his mind.

It's a difficult decision to take even for the leaders.

Even the case management team doesn't favour Aman looking at his position and their own good rapport with the HR team and the Operations team.

Why would a department support an employee of entry-level and go against the 4<sup>th</sup> line Managers and Vice presidents!

Silly! Isn't it?

All rules and regulations apply to the employees at entry level or mid-level.

Once you reach the higher level, most of the rules become mere a formality.

Position decides what's wrong and what's not, who is right and who is wrong! Not the facts or the evidence!!

Mrs. Bandana tries to convince Aman saying he won't be able to prove the points as it can easily be proven tool error or human error and the data are too old. But he refuses to accept his lawyer's points.

andan /India/ To Mishra/India/ CC  
 /2013 04:10 PM Subject: Confidential: Re: Discussion on concerns raised by you [Link](#)

Hello .

This is to inform you about the concerns raised by you against your functional Manager and ex-PeM and your career progression opportunities. In conclusion it has been found that

1. Most of your concerns originated in 2011 & 2012 except 1 which was with respect to you not being nominated for . This has been investigated and found that the nominations were basis the overall stack and just not one parameter.
2. The data mismatch were valid and this was due to tool issue. However the Management team has confirmed that it no longer exists and it has been sorted out.
3. IJP is the only way in which an employee can be promoted in this competency. Therefore, if you are eligible and expecting a progression, you should apply for IJPs which are in line with your interest. You can reach out to your Management in case you need any support for preparing for the same.

We would also encourage you to get your doubts clarified as and when they occur rather than accumulating them. And have open dialogues with your Manager and in case you are not still not satisfied, reach out to your HRP.

Kindly let me know in case of any doubts on the above and if required by you, can arrange for a discussion with your Manager and HRP.

Regards,  
 andan

---

andan Bangalore, Karnataka  
 Case Management and Appeals India  
 Human Resources

Riyaan gladly says, “That’s awesome! As expected.”

“Dude! I can’t believe managers from such responsible departments can be so stupid!”

“These things don’t surprise me anymore. Our task is to utilize their stupidity. Let’s prepare an interesting and suitable reply.”

Aman replies in a rude, sarcastic and unprofessional manner making fun of the case management department and the lawyer.

The screenshots below are the email sent to the attorney by Aman in his/her response.

These emails were also copied to the VPs, MDs and other leaders. The sarcastic and harsh email written by Aman explains everything about his opinion towards the corporate world.

From: Mishra/India/  
To: andan /India/  
Cc: S Narayanan/India, Ray  
Date: /2013 11:12  
Subject: Re: "Confidential: Re: Discussion on concerns raised by you"

Sir,

In life, we hardly get the chance to represent ourselves directly. For ex: We represent our family, our religion, our country, we represent our company, our department. And here, Respected Sir is representing Case Management department. If I find something wrong with the judgement then I will not blame the 'Sir' but the department. Unfortunately, We tend to forget these things.

I had (have) few concerns and I knew there is something called "Concerns and Appeals" dept that can probably help me get rid of it. But I preferred to email my concerns to the Leaders! Why? 'Sir' had asked me the same question during our conference and I'd answered him that after going through all these I've lost the faith. And here we go.

'Sir' I have a few questions for you, with due respect:

First question: Did you really 'study' the case ?

Second Question: Do you really want to accept the reality ?

Third question: Are you being influenced ? Any pressure ?

Please keep the answers within you.

While I understand such concerns are meant to be kept under curtain for many reasons but it is unfortunate to see such a sensitive department trying to 'fool' the concerned employee !! There could have been many other solutions but to fool! If the Dept has decided not to accept the reality then I can't help it.

Ctd..

The screenshot shows an email interface with a table of data. The table has columns for dates and numbers. A red box highlights the 'Email (May-2013)' section. Below the table, there is a red box highlighting 'Wrong data MARCH-2013'.

15:54	6	1	1	1	5	1
09:59	1	1	1	5	5	4

Email (May-2013)

Above data is just an example, the same has been repeated quite often.

Wrong data  
MARCH-2013

Two possibilities: Either Case Management did not see the data or they saw the data. If the Dept did not see the data then it shows that the Dept had not taken the case that seriously. If the Dept saw the data and still came up with these conclusions then I'm sorry for

2) Tool issue: If I was the investigator and 'if I'd investigated the data ' then my doubt would be " Strange tool which recognizes only one Mishra!! How can a tool TARGET !! Developers fault ? " If name = ; do this else act normal I "

Oops Sir! I shouldn't be laughing but I am not able to control myself. Is 'laughing at Case Management department ?

3) You believe that in order to get promoted I got to apply for IJPs: This point is valid as of now because I do not have proper evidence with me to prove you why I did not apply for IJPs.

My intention is not to get someone terminated or harm someone but to let the authorised people know that 'this is the reality. too has a bad face and I want to show a mirror to And only I can see my achievement in this, as a got to take such issues seriously. I'll have no regret of losing job or saying goodbye to but I'll have the regret that is not the that I'd imagined of. Anyway, I'll be all set if the message that I'm trying to convey is conveyed to I am trying to prove my point to And yes, I'm thankful to Case Management team for helping me prove an additional point.

The case management department, as expected, sends a case closure email to Aman stating that no further discussions will be entertained on this case!

/India/  
10/17/2013 03:53 PM  
To: Mishra/India/  
cc: Ray, H; Sir, S; as  
Ma, Roy, i/India/I  
Subject: Re: Confidential: Re: Discussion on concerns raised by you [Link](#)

Hello

This is further to the discussions we have been having with you on your concerns raised on data discrepancy. We have had numerous discussions with you which have involved D, P, S, M, Ray and myself along with your Management team- S, ama and A dey at various stages.

To reiterate, due diligence was conducted on the data which was presented by you and it was determined that there were issues but overall it did not change anything for you as an employee nor were you targeted by your Manager. Appropriate recommendations have been made on the data discrepancy found. Beyond this, there will be no discussion on this matter.

We would urge you to work with your Management team and reach out to them in case you require any support. While I know this is not the answer you had hoped for, please accept my best wishes for the future. Going forward, you will hear nothing further from us on this subject.

Regards,  
andan

andan  
Case Management  
HR Relations  
Bangalore, Karnataka  
India



To this, Aman replies in a single sentence “God bless you all” and forwards these emails to the MD.

Aman and Riyaan do have a couple of backups as they never really relied on internal case management department.

But before taking step, they make sure that the management gets time to defend themselves.

Once again, he conveys his intention of dragging the organisation to the court but this time via Venky.

“Venky! As informed earlier, I am planning to file a case. I was waiting for the internal case management’s verdict. But yes, I may give a second thought if the company agrees to my terms and conditions.”

Venky does take it seriously and sends an email to the HR leader, operation leaders, Mr. Rao and copies Aman.

However, just a couple of hours before him sending the email, the HR leader decides to call Aman for a meeting.



(Evidence attached in the next chapter)

## Chapter 4:

Finally, the HR head, Mr. Chandresan, decides to meet Aman along with Mr. Rao.

The HR leader, like others, tries to convince him by offering a new role or a new team but as always Aman refuses.

“I do not need a new role or a new team. I want you to accept the fact, that’s it.”

But the HR refuses to accept it.

“We are not entertaining you because you are right. We know you’re an employee we don’t want to lose and moreover, you have been with us for more than a couple of years. Tell me what you want, I will try my best to see if we could help you.”

“Had there been no partiality I would have easily been a tech team lead by now. But I don’t want a TL profile anymore! Can you promote me to the Managerial level, i.e. double promotion?

If not, move me to the technology I want to. If not, compensate me with 30 Lacs.” He brazenly it out.

“We can call it blackmailing. This is against our company guidelines and you can be terminated for this.” Warns the HR leader.

“Sir, me asking for compensation is my right and it cannot be considered blackmailing. Btw, which guidelines are you talking about? Is data forgery not a violation of your so called guidelines? Isn’t sending wrong data to the client a violation of such guidelines? When these can be ignored, why can’t my violations be ignored?”

“What nonsense are you talking? Mind your words, you cannot make such allegations without any evidence.”

“Sir, I never claim anything until and unless I have the evidence.”

“What evidence do you have that proves that the wrong data have been sent to the client?”

Aman passes his mobile to the HR leader

“Sir, I have recorded conversations with few Technical Leads. If you go through these conversations, you will realise that they’ve disclosed many sensitive secrets about the management. I’ve removed the names to keep their anonymity, as promised.”

Mr. Chandresan looks strangely at Mr. Rao.

Mr. Rao gets furious, “This is not the right way of doing it. We’ll be compelled to take a harsh decision against you.”

Aman replies impudently, “Mr. Rao, you cannot take any action against me. Do you think I will keep mum?”

Mr. Chandresan interrupts, “Keep your tone low and give at least some respect to your seniors. This is not the way you behave. And what do you mean by you won’t keep quiet? You cannot do anything. Don’t forget your position.”

"My respect doesn't depend upon one's seniority or position. It completely depends upon his character. I know what my position is. I'm at a position where I can screw up the whole system. But it's high time you accepted the reality, Sir."

"Truly said by Harriet Tubman 'I freed a thousand slaves! I could have freed a thousand more if only they knew they were slaves!' Mind you! Losers work in the corporate world and winners own it. No matter what position you are at, if you're not an owner, you're a slave just like me. We're in the same boat. You, being at a better position, are slightly higher level slave than me."

Ouch! That was a blunt one from arrogant Aman.

The infuriated HR managers look furiously at Aman.

Aman passes the mobile again to the HR.

“Do you want to see what I can do? Apart from recording conversations with Technical Leaders, I’ve also recorded feedbacks of random employees where they clearly accept nepotism.

Moreover, Mr. Rao, do you remember my last meeting with you where you’ve offered me a new role? You offering me a new role proves that I am right. It may surprise you but I’ve recorded the whole meeting in mobile.”

Mr. Rao and Mr. Chandresan are shocked.

Nervousness can clearly be seen on their face.

Aman adds, “What if I forward all these evidences to the media? But I won’t, because it’s my dream company and its reputation is my concern. However, if I do not get what I am looking for then I’ll be forced to drag this company to the court.”

Now, they receive Venky’s email which clearly states everything in written:

Please find the screenshot of the original email sent by Venky to the Hr Leader and others.



The screenshot shows an email interface. The header includes: From: Venk. S. (India); To: Aman, Ray; Cc: A. S. (India); Date: 2013 01:35; Subject: Excerpts of the discussion with Mishra. The body of the email is as follows:

GE Team -

As you are aware has expressed the desire to take the legal route a few days ago. On Friday he spoke to me saying that he would not take the legal route if we were to consider a couple of his options.

I quote him as he spoke:

"I feel bad about the fact that I am having to drag you and Ray to the court of law. I have since decided that I'd not file a case in the event offers me either a double band progression with a handsome salary raise or lakhs as compensation and relieves me of my services with Please do not ignore or think that I'd not file a case and win it because I have all the proof and recordings of the discussion that I have had with you and the HR. Please get the HR to speak to me before the Tuesday next week because I'd be filing the case on Wednesday."

In addition to this he approached me again today to ask if the HR was ready discuss the above mentioned points with him before end of Tuesday as he'd file a case against on Wednesday morning.

Thanks and Regards,

Venkates  
FLM

“This is insane. It’s a crime. These things will not be taken lightly.” Shouts Mr. Rao.

But Mr. Chandresan keeps calm and points out, “You see, even if we make you the manager, you won’t be able to handle it. You’re not mature enough.”

“What is maturity? Being diplomatic is not being mature. Wearing a fake smile doesn’t make one mature. For me, realising the importance of self-respect, taking stand for rights and being real is maturity.”

“So isn’t being straight forward!” replies the HR leader sarcastically.

“Anyways, the technology that you want to move to requires certifications. We can move you to the technology if you get the certifications done.” Mr. Chandresan gives an option.

“Sir, the certification costs 80k. I know few employees who’ve moved to the same technology without any certifications. Why not me?”

“Not that we’re aware of. The maximum we can do is, help you move to the technology but for that you need to do certification.”

“Sir, after spending over three years in corporate world, I’ve learned that everything is possible when it comes to promotions or movements. All you need is good contacts.” Aman keeps it straight.

“I’ve been in this world for over 20 years and I’ve learned that only hard work and dedication can give you promotions. Its better you change your negative thinking.” Advices the HR leader.

“You’re right, employees do work hard to please their boss and are dedicated towards the same.” Replies sarcastically.

“You don’t seem to be in compromising mood.”

“I am ready to compromise. Compensate me for the years that I’ve spent in this company fighting for my rights.”

“You can apply for IJPs, that’s the only way to get promoted or switch technology. We cannot give you monetary compensation since that’s against our company’s policy.”

Aman laughs in sarcasm which irritates the HR leaders.

“You need to work on your attitude. This attitude will take you nowhere.”

*“With your kind of attitude if you can lead the HR department, I am pretty sure that with my attitude I can rule the world.”* Thinks Aman.

“Sir! If you think I do not have valid points then let the court decide it. For more discussion, I will see you in court.” warns Aman and leaves.

He informs Riyaan and congratulates him saying he was able to piss off the HR leader and succeeded in frustrating him.

They start collecting information about labour law.

After a research of couple days they finalize to approach the Deputy Commissioner of police of labour department.

He’s a reputed person and his background suggests he’s an honest officer.

Aman calls up the DCP and explains him everything.

Aman even asks the DCP if demanding money as compensation can be considered blackmailing to which the DCP confirms that it cannot be considered blackmailing as long as he can prove that he does deserve a compensation.

The DCP suggests Aman to send an application to him so that he can take it forward from there.

Aman writes an application to the DCP accusing the company of data forgery, mental harassment, wrong employee appraisal etc.

Aman also informs his company about him approaching the DCP, so that they can prepare themselves to defend!

Yet another attempt from the organisation to threat Aman!

They give him another warning letter.

He forwards the letter to the MD.

The HR leader, Mr. Rao and Aman are called to the commissioner's office for discussion with the DCP.

Aman learns that the HR department have already had couple of meetings at commissioner's office though for Aman this is his first meeting!

Apparently, they'd tried calling Aman but they were unable to reach him.

Anyways, Mr. Rao and Mr. Chandresan reach there with a lawyer.

"You shouldn't have done this. At least you could have waited for us to take a decision. Anyways, where is your lawyer?" asks Mr. Rao

"Sir I did give you sufficient time and even informed you in prior about my intentions. I can't afford a lawyer at this point, I'll handle it myself." Replies Aman.

They have to wait for the DCP for over 30 minutes and it's embarrassing for Mr. Chandresan to be standing in queue being at such a top position.

Anger and embarrassment!

Finally, they get to meet the DCP.

After listening to both the parties DCP appreciates Aman's courage but also advises him to be careful with his career as he's at the initial phase of career and it's too early to get into all these.

"Please take it as a parental advisory. You have just started your career. If you drag the issue then it will harm you as well. I will suggest you to sort it out internally rather than taking this issue to the court." Suggests the DCP.

"Sir even I don't intend to drag them to the court or intend to blackmail them. Whatever I demand, it's because I deserve it. If there are companies where an employee has been rewarded multiple times, performed consistently, contributed to the account and the site, holds a good over 3 yrs. experience but is not promoted then there has to be something wrong with the promotion-process! Let them call it blackmailing or whatever they want to. I call it my right! "

The HR managers still try to defend themselves saying it was due to technical error.

"If I don't get justice here then not only will I drag them to the court but also forward all the evidence to media. But I don't want to get into extreme. Its better they give me my right." Demands Aman.

The HR leader informs that \*\*\*\*\* had already ordered them to take care of his demand.

"We've received an email asking to move him to the new technology but before we could inform him officially he'd already filed a case against us. We regret for the inconvenience." Informs Mr. Chandresan.

Even the DCP concludes it in Aman's favour.

Before writing off; the DCP gives an advice to Aman, "Corruption is everywhere. Nepotism, favouritism etc. are common. **This is the reality of the world! If you think you're capable changing it then please go ahead and change it. If not, accept the reality and change yourself to fit into this world.** You're like my son, please take it as an advice, such attitude can ruin your career."

"I'll keep that in mind, Sir."

The DCP writes his conclusion in a paper and asks both the parties to sign it.

Aman notices the paper is only half-filled, one paragraph, and signed at the bottom corner leaving half of the paper blank.

He smiles within, signs it and ignores to even collect the paper!

He senses something fishy again and prefers not to collect a copy so that he can take up this as his next challenge just in case they modify or change the DCP's order.

Within fifteen days, he receives an interview call for an IJP for the technology that he always wanted to move to.

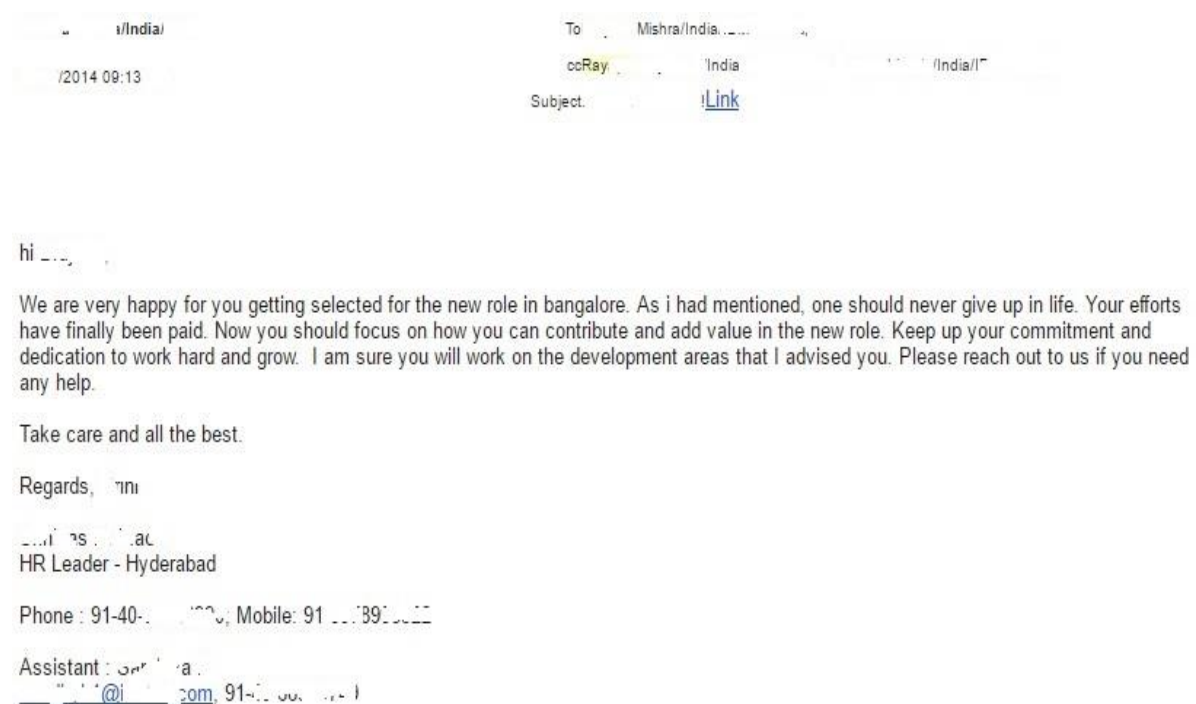
Clears the interview quite easily which seemed more like a formality.

A triumph!

A battle fought for years!

A battle everyone expected would end in a disastrous note for Aman, has eventually paid him for his courage.

The HR leader sends an email to him congratulating for his new role.



Aman spends nearly two years in this technology, gets a couple of promotions and quits the company.

But before quitting he makes sure to thank Mrs Vaidyan for her support.

He also confesses everything to her in the email.

## The climax

### Today

It's 2:30 am and Aman is at his home.

Asleep.

Suddenly he wakes up and screams:

“Hey! Who's there? Come out. Who are you hiding from?”

He sees a shadow of a man who appears to be as tall as him.

The shadow walks towards him.

***“Wake up buddy! Show me the progress. Let's finish it off today”***, says the shadow which resembles Aman, and slowly looms into Riyaan.

“Hey Riyaan! I wanted to finish it off but I was waiting for you. Come! Sit.”

Makes a joint, starts smoking up, turns on his laptop and starts typing.

- a) I am a good planner
- b) I like writing
- c) I can play chess, cricket, snooker etc.
- d) I can sing

I always had a target in my mind but the challenge was to reach there. It was important for me to know what my strengths are.



After realising that if we utilize my skills we can achieve my goals, we started planning to utilize it.

For us, self-respect is above all.

Self-respect for us is being our own hero.

I have a teacher, a best friend and a critic in me.

I never miss a chance to impress my hero.

At times Riyaan tells me I am too good to be true which is true because I can go to any extend to impress him.

I'm a so called split personality.

But wait! Not like the ones we see in movies where one is usually good and the other one is bad!

Touchwood, in my case, one of me is good and the other one is excellent.

We respect each other for being 'me' and we want this respect to continue till the end."

Riyaan interrupts and says, "*Let me continue from here. Pass me the laptop.*"

He writes:

*We started creating pages on social media with an intention to reach more people and grab their attention and at the same time we knew some day these pages could be used as proofs! We started sharing original quotes, inspiring stories and poems which keeps hinting the followers as well as reminding me of my goals. Those people who follow my pages closely are somewhat aware of my intention and know what I'm trying to prove.*

*We then posted Ads on different websites claiming myself a mastermind who wants to utilize his brain and work for a genuine and transparent cause.*

*We titled it 'Brain for sale!'*

*We did receive few calls and emails but were not transparent enough.*

*Let me explain you what exactly we're trying to do.*

*"The challenge for Aman/me is to take ourselves to the height where we can make a difference to the society."*

*The intention was/is to reach one powerful person who I can prove myself a mastermind to. We want to get associated with a person powerful enough to make a difference to the society. If we impress him, through him, we can make a difference to the society.*

*Next, we decided to do something which would help us get fame so that we don't have to try and reach that person, instead he will approach us.*

*We sent an email to the media confessing myself a mastermind but we were not entertained. Perhaps, it was not convincing enough or maybe I lacked evidences or maybe they didn't even check my emails. Whatever be the reason, we failed to grab media's attention.*

*Name sells!*

*When a big man says something as small as "I drink water every day."*

*It becomes a breaking news and a quote! ☺*

*BREAKING NEWS "Mr. X drinks water every day!"*

*But an ordinary or 'mango' people like me who writes hundreds of real-inspiring quotes, poems and stories, they go unnoticed!*

*For an ordinary person, the difficulty to reach the goal doubles.*

*The challenges double!*

*Be it in corporate world or in real world, position is all that matters.*

One of the pages that I've been running for years:

<https://www.facebook.com/iamsplitpersonality>

Aman passes the joint to Riyaan and continues writing;

We realised that the brand name matters.

We didn't give up and made a long-term plan instead, which required me to get associated with a brand big enough to make headlines and keep planning & achieving until we were convinced of ourselves.

Despite being told by many to grab any job that comes my way as a fresher, I'd refused to attend interviews.

I waited for 8 months before I got an offer from The Dreams Pvt Ltd.

Apart from being my dream company, I also wanted to get associated with a big brand thinking that in future it will help me implement my plans.

It always draws more attention when you're associated with some brand, for example, "Mr. X claims to be a mastermind!" or "An employee from, let's say, Microsoft or Google or as huge as these, claims to be a mastermind!" which statement attracts more attention?

I joined The Dream Pvt Ltd. One of the leading IT companies of World. My first goal was achieved.

Next, for me to sound convincing it was important to achieve things that can help me prove my point.

Hence, the next challenge was to keep planning and achieving.

The Riyaan in me would challenge me to prove myself and vice versa.

At one point we were all set as we had the brand name to back us up and our social network to grab the attention.

After having a reach of over 15000 audience, we were in a position where we could commit a small online crime, get arrested, inform the media and confess everything to them that it was a well-planned arrest. Show them the evidence and come out clean.

Initially, it did sound convincing to both of us but we realised that it may not be equally good for the people and organisations that are associated with us.

I was not in a position to reveal myself because there are reputed colleges, people and organisation that are linked to me.

And, the hero in me cannot be selfish and not think of the reputation of my organisation, colleges and the people I had had conflict with.

My company is still my dream company.

I am a proud former employee of my company and I have high respect for them.

The incidents from my company don't show my hatred towards them but my love for them. Had I not considered them a family, I wouldn't ever try to take stand or clean the system.

Anyways, so we thought of sticking to what we were doing.

That is, get ourselves into trouble, plan further and come out of it.

In short, collect evidences.

Mostly, prior to getting into troubles, we plan how to come out of it.

We don't miss a chance to take 'stands' even for others.

Sometimes, to unmask the biased and racial brains, we even target them and purposely provoke them.

Be it in college or corporate world, we messed up with the 'power' and escaped safely.

Fortunately, God has been kind to us to give us situations and people who we take as opportunity to prove.

For example, at college, equal rights for students, entry of a new Director, his divide-and-rule nature etc. and at my workplace; politics and partiality.

We used Venky's biased nature and hatred towards me as a weapon.

We started frustrating him more.

He wouldn't actually misuse his power to that extent had I not forced him to.

He would never escalate the issues or alter my data to that level had I not shouted at him openly or frustrated him!

We created the situations where he'd no options but to show his real face.

To make it more challenging we informed them before taking any step, challenged them, frustrated them and used their frustration as weapon.

We forced them to take unfair actions against me so that we can further use those actions as evidence!

We knew all these small achievements put together would make it big.

Truly said 'Do what you love doing and you will love doing what you do.'

So the long term plan was to utilize my second skill.

My skills: I am a good planner; I love writing.

We planned to utilize my 'love for writing'!

As per the plan, we had to keep proving ourselves because we thought we need more ingredients to sound more convincing and at the same time it must sound interesting to people.

All the plans, controversies and conflicts were nothing but ingredients that we were looking for.

Few of them were invited while few came naturally our way.

And, once we were convinced that if we put all these real incidents together then it does make a good reading, we decided to execute it.

That is, to write a book.

After failing to reach that person through Ads and after failing to convince media, we thought the other way to reach people without revealing college's and organisation's name and at the same time to be able to explain everything, is to write a book.

Now, for us to be able to impress that person, there is nothing better than revealing ourselves completely in a single go.

There is no better option than being an open book!

This is us. An open book!

Read and judge us.

This is our story.

A life-story I write for ourselves and we try to live it the way I write.

Neither it is an autobiography nor a book but a plan to reach that person.

God forbid, but even if this book fails to help me take off, we are sure to come up with something bigger.

Failure is something that encourages me to do better.

Though in this book we've mainly focused on my achievements, we've failed miserably many times.

There are a couple of times we have been ashamed of ourselves for not being able to achieve something I desperately wanted to.

There are plans we'd to change midway because we realized it could be too dangerous.

There are few girls I failed to impress.

And many more.

Nevertheless, I accept defeat full heartedly!

This is when we tease, laugh and help myself have a reality check and improve myself.

I've already written next few chapters of our life.

If we live it the way we've planned to, sooner or later you will see us at a bigger stage.

Then, you would probably say:

'Hey! I've read his horribly-written book. But yes, he's done it!'

Dear Reader, my journey continues... a journey you're a witness of!

This is yet another attempt to find an answer to the question:

..... the confession of a mastermind or proof of abnormality?

Dear Reader, this time, it's you who will decide it.

**I am** waiting for your feedback.

I mean, **I are...**

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Aman shuts down the laptop.

"I am done writing. What do you say?"

*“Are you sure you want to include the screenshots of the emails?”*

Aman gives a smile and adds **“When I’m not in trouble, I am bored.** Anyways, is it worth reading?”

*“Fingers crossed! Often, the authenticity of autobiography of an ordinary man is questioned.”* replies Riyaan with a straight face.

“Then I’d suggest them to read the book again.”

*“Esp. the second chapter of Childhood.”* Says Riyaan with a sarcastic smile.

“Anyways, I must sleep now it’s already 6:00 am. Good night!”

*“I want to take Aman to the height where success would seek his help to succeed!”* thinks ambitious Riyaan while Aman falls asleep.

*“I’ll always be there whenever he should need me. I promise.”* Thinks and disappears.

## **Humour:**

*When I was normal I used to feel sad for the abnormal people. Now that I am abnormal, I feel sad for the normal people.*

- **Written By: The Mishra**  
***A Split Personality (SP)***

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- Aman/Riyaan is currently in New Delhi planning his next venture.
- His Grandpa passed away in Aug, 2016.
- Both Nayan and Pranav are married now for over 5 years and settled in Australia
- Touchwood, all are in touch.
- Akansha is married to a rich businessman.
- Alima is settled abroad with her hubby and Shivani is married & settled in the US.

- And yes, Aman/Riyaan had scored 98% in Computer-Lab Practical exam. Thanks to the Lab Ma'am.
- Apparently, couple of managers received warning letter and their promotions were abolished for a certain period of time.
- Venky is still with the same company. My friends working in that company say he's changed a lot. No partiality, no politics and moreover no racial/caste/religion discriminations!
- The management of that site is more transparent now and employees are free to take their stand, put forward their concerns and skip-meet the higher level directly, if required.
- The process of conducting internal job posting, IJPs, had already been modified in my presence when I conveyed the concern stating them that IJPs are not fair enough and managers influence the interviewers. To rectify it, the organisation, now doesn't mention the name of the manager who'd be interviewing the candidate. The interviewer is selected randomly at the last moment.

No place for woman in Riyaan/Aman's life as he's not yet achieved his goals.

Interestingly, he never had a Gf after Alima, as he'd promised her!

Every character and incident mentioned in this book are real.

The name of: person, place, organisation and colleges have been changed.

Dates are not accurate.

Neither am I a professional writer nor an aspiring writer. You might have noticed many grammatical errors and badly constructed sentences.

Keeping the intention of this highly ambitious book and my originality in mind, I preferred to publish it in my own language.

Hence, this book is not edited by any professional editor.

For me selling billions of copies of this book but not being able to reach the targeted person is not an achievement. Rather, selling a single copy of the book to the one I am looking for, is an achievement.

### **Casts:**

Grandpa and Grandma

Dad and Mom

Aman / Riyaan



Nutan/ Childhood Didi

Pranav/ Childhood best friend

Nayan/ Childhood best friend

Akansha

Shivani

Alima

The Director/s (College)

Mr. Kumar

Venkat / Venky / Manager

Sunitha Vaidyan/ MD

Mr. Sharma/ Manager

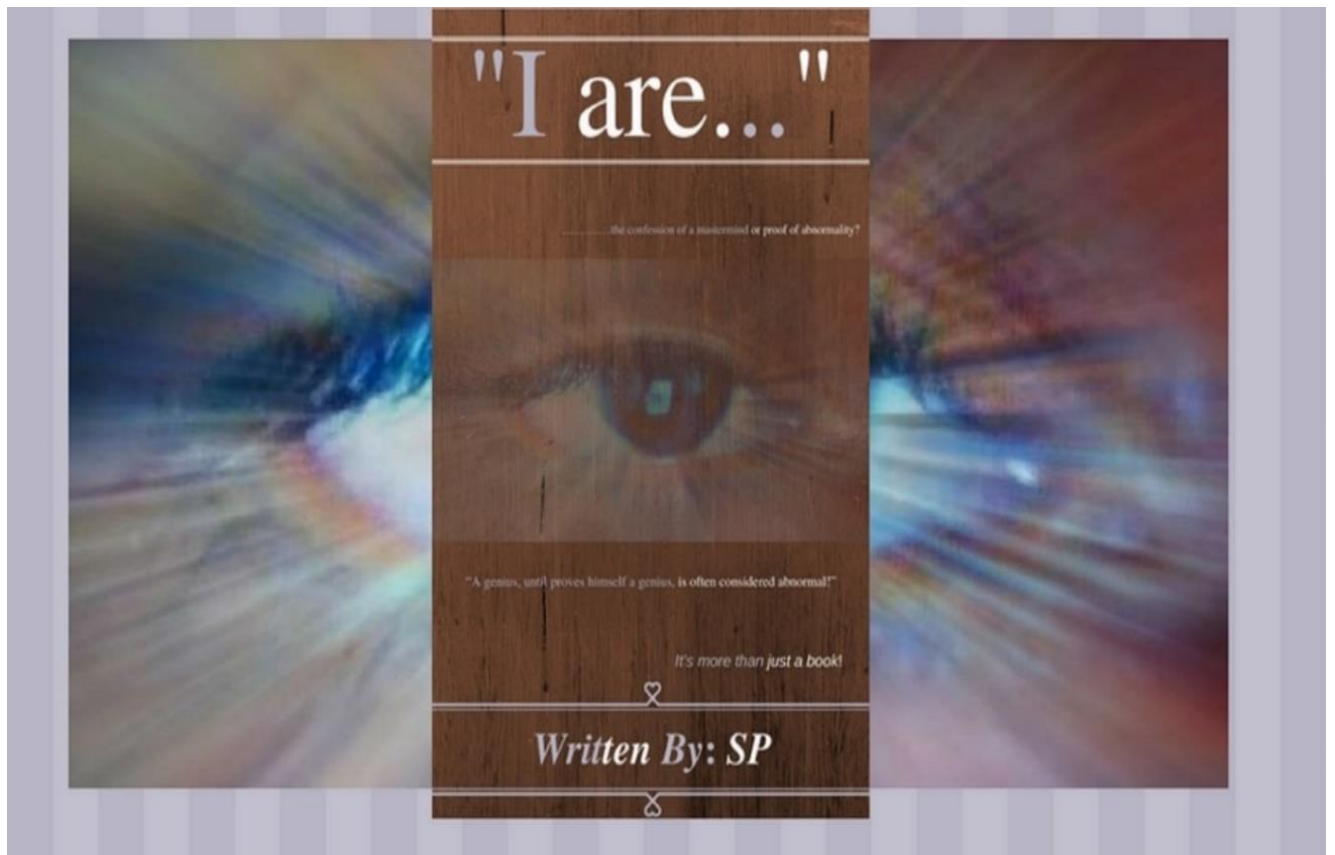
Mr. Chandresan/ HR leader

Mr. Rao/ HR Manager

Bandana/ Internal-Lawyer

Majid/ Technical Team Leader

And others.



-----THE END-----